Encounter

January 1979 £1

David Martin

Church Trends & Fashionable Theologians

Martin Esslin

Black Propaganda

David Owen

Britain & Europe

Colin Welch

Crosland's Socialism

First publication of Leo Labedz's long-withheld sequel to

Deutscher's "Stalin"

Sidney Hook

Caute's Fable of "Fear & Terror"

Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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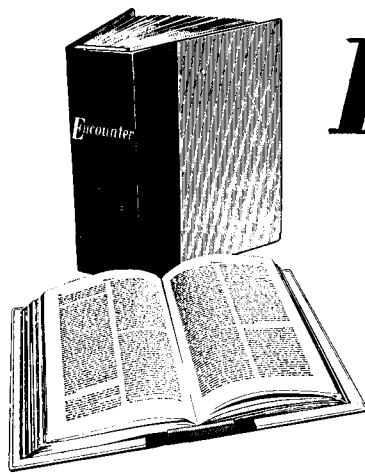

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It's the Listener's 50th anniversary.

And we'd like to thank everyone who's supported us over the years. All the companies, big and small, who have found it valuable to advertise in the Listener.

And all our readers. Who, we hope, will continue to enjoy our sharp unbiased columns.

If on this occasion we haven't been entirely objective, we trust you'll make allowances.

After all, it is our birthday.

The Listener

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Daphne Merkin

Sailing

LATER, WHEN HIS interest cools along with the weather, she searches—in mirrors, in passing faces—for traces of her former self, the self he wanted. When did it change, the temperature of his desire dropping to a moderate, containable degree, and why? She will rummage in the closets of her past for the self that was a perfect fit: she will put it on and be discarded no longer.

She will dance across his sight and make his blood boil. She will fling open her shirt, and the curve of her breast will make him gasp. He will run a finger inside his collar, suffering from constraint. Slowly she will relieve him.

It is a physical pain, the pain of longing; she can't imagine anyone has experienced it and endured.

Will you run away with me? he asked one night shortly after they met. Now, when she turns a corner, the question rebounds in her ears, and yes, she whispers to his absence, I will.

They are sitting in the bar of a midtown hotel. There are little, thoughtful bowls of peanuts on the tables. She is smoking because the room seems to require it. The room has blue walls, conducive to intimacy. She inhales too deeply and the smoke catches in her throat, making her cough until her eyes water. He takes her cigarette and puts it out.

He is twelve years older than she, an almost-middle-aged man. Another ten years and he would qualify as a father figure. He is established. He no longer considers other forms than the one his life has taken. "My job is very important", he tells her. It is not clear to her whether he is convinced of this, or if it is wishful thinking. He is a lawyer; he says he is committed to people rather than to cases. She chooses to believe him, though the evidence is inconclusive.

She is a graduate student in musicology and spends long hours in the library, transcribing early music notation into its modern equivalent. She writes neatly, intent on providing her notes with perfectly round circles and ruler-straight stems. She erases frequently: this helps her keep her mind on her work. Even so, she often surprises herself in the middle of trance-like states. She has failed to pinpoint the exact moment of transition, the moment of withdrawal from the verifiable. Still, she savours the aftertaste of these stares: she comes away with a sense of wide spaces, a cessation of effort that is like the suspension of all anxiety.

It is only the second time they have met, and already she is telling him about sadness. The desolation of Sunday afternoon, she calls it. He is not the kind of man to make a big deal of understanding her, so she wants him to. The desolation of Sunday afternoon, he repeats after her, that hour between four and five, I usually watch TV. She is pleased he has picked up her phrase, a thread stitching them closer together. He asks her who she likes to read and she confesses she has never been able to read Faulkner. He says he has never read Tolstoy. They smile at each other gleefully. They are so intelligent, she realises, that they can concede such lapses. When she gets up to go to the ladies' room he asks, Will you run away with me? Where to, she asks quickly, masking her confusion—her delight—as though their destination were the important thing. New Haven, he says, laughing. The question is so romantic, so transparently insincere that she checks herself in the mirror: has her hair turned golden? Never before has she known herself to be the object of inspiration.

Sometimes now she goes to French movies. She puts her coat on the seat next to hers so it will look as if she is with someone. In her mind

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she is saving it for him. Once, a man sits down before she has a chance to appropriate the seat. He turns his head and the line of his cheek, the close-set ears, reminds her so much of him, that her heart accepts it as proof of the real thing and thumps inside her.

A certain kind of movie can do the trick for her, fill in the missing texture, pad the angles of her existence; there in her seat she is absorbed by the firm neutrality of objects, the graininess of elongated loaves of French bread, the pores of the actors' skin, the slate colour of certain villages when seen from above, and her own inner world pales out by comparison, loses its devious hold for a while in the darkened theatre.

LOVE, HE SAYS, with incalculable disdain, and then puts his arm around her. She is relieved; all is desire, a temporary displacement of hostilities. It is Tuesday evening in the zoo and the polar bears prowl, restless in their cages. One of them, his white fur matted and yellowing, stands up against the bars. A little boy screams, with excitement or fear. She finds this part of the zoo ominous, full of shadows and silence. He turns to her and says, You know I'm crazy about you. Immediately she tells herself it's a line, of course it's a line, but she believes him anyway. Why not? Someone *could*, conceivably, be crazy about her. The white-painted rocks in the polar bears' cages gleam with a chilly, prehistoric light. She tucks her arm inside his.

She thinks he is the smartest man she has ever known. He is smart in ways she is distinctly not. His mind moves speedily but progressively. He never confuses emotion with the truth. Truth, he says, is invariably abstract. She has to agree with this because it sounds right. There are certain areas of thought—emotion, rather—he seems never to have stumbled into. The first night they have an argument she says she wants to die, and he is at first astonished, and then flattered. Because of me? he asks, because of this? No, she says, it's nothing so hysterical. Or specific. You wouldn't understand. Try me, he says. He lies awake while she explains it to him, this lust as tempting as any other. He nods his head, tugs at her when she pauses and says, it doesn't really matter, and afterwards he kisses her all over, gentle, respectful kisses, as though she had fallen down and hurt herself.

The first night they go away together they both behave like tourists. She is prepared for her own unease but not for his; she assumes he has done this kind of thing before. They go to a hotel because she does not want to yield up everything. He visits her in her apartment and is amused by her refusal to let him stay overnight. She imagines he attributes it to something quaint and proper in her, when actually it is deeper than breeding: her instinct for the pristine, her small, guarded plot of the inviolable.

There is an awkward moment when the door is closed after them and he turns on the television and watches an interview as though he doesn't know what they are here for. She inspects the paintings on the wall; they remind her of the garish canvases produced by the paint-by-number kits of her childhood. She goes into the bathroom and runs the water loudly, thinking this will help her to feel at home. She looks into the cabinet and sniffs the wrapped squares of soap. She moves the cellophane-wrapped glasses from one shelf to another. She hears the television being clicked off in the next room. She comes out, hoping she has allowed him enough time to decide on a course of action. He is lying on the bed with his arms folded behind his head. He stares at her and she says, "Do I look familiar? Or do I have the wrong room?" He laughs and pats the bed. "Come over here", he says. He undoes her bra and draws her to him, gravely. She thinks they are burdened with an excess of civility: the occasion calls for a crudeness, a zeal, at the very least, that each of them lacks.

She is confused by his love-making; it is both more ardent and less assured than she had expected. It is even affectionate. He presses her tightly against him and sighs. She understands that he is the kind of person—although she had thought it truer of women than of men—in whom pleasure induces wistfulness. He rubs his hand in soothing motions along her back. Just as she feels herself dozing off he asks, "You haven't done this very often, have you?" "No", she says, and she is wide awake.

She knows things about him he doesn't know she knows: pebbly facts she scrapes against. She has heard that his wife is not particularly attractive, mousy in fact. She does not crow with triumph, as she would have thought: she feels sorry for him instead,

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anchored to this mistake of his youth. She wants to show him beauty, arrogant light-headed days.

His life remains unknown. He lets drop tid-bits, insignificant clues, the name of his college, his passion for movies. She scrambles wildly for information and comes up sweaty, empty-headed. At first she likes it better this way. She speculates about him, imagining the worst, violent rages against a bewildered, pale-faced wife in the dark of night. When she tells him, he merely smiles; refutation, he implies, is unnecessary. She remembers a saying at the beginning of a Gothic novel: "Dig in the soil of a quiet man and you unearth the savage." She prints it on a slip of paper and sends it unsigned to his office, the envelope marked "Personal." He never mentions it and she wonders if he is crazy; no one could be so discreet without having something to hide.

IT GETS COLDER just about the time they begin seeing each other in earnest. She wears boots and men's thick sweaters; standing on street-corners, waiting for him, she feels like a displaced person, or more comfortingly, like one half of a displaced pair.

One evening, late in December, he takes her to a bar near his office and watches her as she drinks, her face stuck deep in the glass like a horse at a trough. She drinks slowly, enraptured as a child by his attention. Suddenly he stands up and snaps his fingers, his style overdone—a display of fireworks in this tiny, dark hole. He orders a Jack Daniels and swills it around with his index finger, the ice-cubes clicking. She likes the name of his drink: it makes her think of rectitude, a tweed jacket and pipe. Two stools away a sad-eyed man excuses himself and asks for a light. He takes out a silver lighter and clicks it graciously, his hand resting on her knee. The man leans back and inhales, closing his eyes. You a regular? he asks. They chat deftly, quick male comrades. She watches the ghostly blue light of the television set over their heads: a bat cracks against a ball, far-away spectators cheer.

He orders her another drink. She feels the careful, watching part of her mind ease up, like stays loosening. The contents of her head slosh around in joyous abandon. The sad-eyed man gets up to leave; they say goodbye to him like old friends. She leans closer to him, pressing the glass against her cheek, smiling. She can't remember when she last felt so happy. She thinks that she could, with just the smallest of efforts, make everything right with the world.

But you don't really hate yourself, she says, thinking of something he said weeks ago, something about being tired first thing in the morning, about sleep having lost its restorative powers.

Of course, he says, but not all the time.

No you shouldn't, she says, you really shouldn't.

She drops her head on his shoulder. He smells dry and clean, excretionless.

My father was what you'd call a noble man. He couldn't see what was happening to me, the kind of compromises I was making.

She waits, holding her breath, afraid the faintest disturbance might silence him forever. The strain is palpable; she can hear the hinges of his heart creak, unaccustomed to such wanton revelation.

He didn't recognise unhappiness. You worked hard and lived right and you didn't have time to think about those things. Or so he figured it.

She thinks of her bathroom cabinet filled with pills, garnered from the four corners of the earth. Pills to wake up, to go to sleep, to cheer up, to calm down. She pictures his father, grey-skinned, hollow-cheeked, a latter-day Cotton Mather, staring at her with contempt as she swallows several at once.

Do you ever take pills? she asks.

Aspirin, he says.

What time do you get up in the morning? (It occurs to her that if she gets the facts down quickly enough, if she can pin him down to simple truths, the less simple ones will show up, too.)

Around seven, he says moodily. Later on weekends, if the kids don't wake me.

And how do you feel when you wake up? I hate people who wake up ready to rise and shine.

My wife and I take turns being cheerful. That's what's called a working marriage.

She wonders if this rare reference to his marriage is a bemused signal to her: See how empty it all is.

What would you do if you met me now at a party? she asks.

I'd say hello.

No, I mean, how would you feel?

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Feel? He tastes the word cautiously, as if it were a strange, possibly poisonous, food.

Would you feel pleased?

As opposed to what?

Oh, I don't know. You could feel embarrassed, I guess. Or just anxious.

Anxious?

He repeats the word in italics, incredulously. (Later, she recalls this conversation as a warning of what he is capable of, an almost bestial detachment.)

Yes, aren't you ever anxious?

Sure. Sometimes. But I don't get what that would have to do with you, I mean with meeting you at a party.

Why?

Why what?

Why *wouldn't* it?

IT IS SHE who is feeling anxious now: there is something here—something striking only in that it is so obvious—that is eluding her. Yet it is clear, from the way he is speaking, that there is nothing slippery about this, at least not to him. *He* grips it firmly, this nugget of insight, like the leather briefcase he always carries.

Because—and he says this in the deliberate, drawn-out way people say things when they want to make sure there can be no mistaking the implications—because—and here he pauses again—I don't quite see the connection. There's you and there's the rest of my life. I don't think I've ever said or done anything to lead you to believe otherwise. Should this party you've concocted ever arise, I'd be charmed to see you.

Oh, she says.

She senses her mouth doing something strange, she seems to have lost control over it—is she smiling? or frowning?—and then, because she fears she may be doing something of a different order entirely, something akin to a grimace, she picks up the glass in front of her and finishes the drink.

She stares at him and notices the deep shadows under his eyes, like two blue-grey crayon smudges. Even in her muddled state she can see that they don't belong to him, these shadows, imbuing his face with a spurious depth. They are the shadows of a different, a more agonised man. She imagines that she is looking into his mind; it is a vast, supremely organised network. There are filing cabinets everywhere. She goes over to one and takes out a folder with her name marked on it in large, easy-to-read print. She will take it away with her, this dossier of pertinent facts: eyes—hazel; weight—average; disposition—"difficult." She will upset his order with the most pertinent fact of all: whereabouts—unknown.

Is something the matter? His eyes are narrowed. He is suspicious, not concerned.

There is no need to answer. The space between them contracts as the alcohol travels up her spine and settles blissfully at the base of her neck. She is warm and tingling and can no longer remember what saddens her. She stretches her arms, luxuriating in carelessness.

Are you in love with your wife? she asks.

Her voice surprises her as well as him. It is husky with new-found assurance. She could be Marlene Dietrich.

Yes, he snaps off the words, very much.

SHE DECIDES never to speak to him again. By the end of the second week of silence she bows to the inevitable, and thinks about him, yearns for him and detests him, all the time. She discovers she has little else to do other than this. Her world is filled with him: he stalks her, a second shadow overtaking her own. She wonders if she is experiencing a fatal, womanly disease, if it might not be a simple matter of organic weakness. She is not even in love.

She sits by the river in the middle of the afternoon, after a dentist appointment, reading newspapers, dedicating herself to the retention of facts, submitting to their discipline. She has had two cavities filled. Her dentist is expensive and jocular, with an office overlooking the East River. His breath smells of mint and he always gives her an injection because he understands that she is a highly-strung girl. He has taken care of her teeth ever since she came up to his knee, and each time before he starts the drilling he raises his hand, as though under oath, and asks, "Aren't I always good to you?" The question touches her deeply: it is shiny with goodwill, innocent of motive. This morning when she left, her mouth feeling velvety from the novocaine, Dr Cohen took her arm and said, "You look tired. Tell your boyfriend not to give you so much trouble."

The wind rises and a large, mangy dog barks at her from behind the bench. She folds

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up her papers, goes to a phone-booth and dials his office number. She stares up into the darkening sky and tries to pretend that she is not implicated in what she is doing. She visualises herself standing outside the phone-booth and looking in, with great curiosity, at the girl inside, who appears to be shouting.

I hate you! she is saying. Really, you make me sick. What kind of man are you? Do you do this kind of thing often? Does it give you pleasure?

He laughs nervously on the other end, then covers the mouthpiece and murmurs something. She hears a female voice, then a door closing.

Might I see you tonight, he asks, unusually formal.

She hesitates for several seconds, to fool herself rather than him.

Please, he says, I want to.

Later, when she walks into the restaurant, dressed in white, flaunting her vulnerability, his eyes widen in admiration. They talk as if nothing has happened. She doesn't tell him how her life has stopped for two weeks. She has learned quickly that he prefers her most when she is jaunty, sure of her charms. Tonight, as if to quicken the pace, he wants to hear about the other men in her life. She makes things up, creates a rival whom he fails to recognise as such. He chucks her under the chin approvingly.

Would you like another dessert? How about some strawberries?

No, she says, I can't eat any more. I always eat too much.

She feels lost amid so much playfulness. She takes out her wallet and shows him a photograph of herself kissing a baby. He will turn tender, understanding that the maternal instinct flows warmly under her banter: she will love his children, whom he has never mentioned.

You can't talk to babies, he says, looking politely at the photograph.

She explains that she likes the sweet *un*peopleness of babies.

Yes, he says, women always do.

He stresses these differences of gender as though he were proving a fine point.

SHE HAS HEARD—she is not unresourceful—that he is a doting father. Disbelieving, she called him once at home. A woman answered, children chattered in the background. She was startled by the ease with which they had been summoned up. In an elaborate foreign accent she asked for François. What number did you want? The woman was polite but hurried. The woman was his wife; the children were diminutive versions of the two of them. She saw a skinny little girl with his pale skin and neat features. He would return to dinner and domestic routine: this ordinariness was his best-kept secret. Except that it was not. He has never pretended to anything else, to marital discontent or thwarted passion. It is she who has been insisting upon his misery, interpreting his silences as modest evasions of painful subjects. What if there *were* none? He barricaded her from his real life because that's the way he wanted it.

He turns to her, rubbing his hands. She wonders what would happen if she cried, used the age-old tactic of the disadvantaged, tears dribbling down her cheeks, her nose red and sniffly. Would he offer her chocolate mousse? Or would he hold her in his arms, touched by her manifest frailty? He doesn't touch her often: sex lies between them, glittering and mostly unused. She cannot even charge him with exploiting her. On the cab-ride home she says, not bothering to lower her voice, You could rape me.

He gestures toward the cab-driver whose ears, she could swear, are pointed upwards.

Right here? he asks, Right now? Then he nuzzles her, awkwardly.

Do you want me to tell you a dirty joke?

If you want to, she says, suddenly indifferent, weary of being tantalised.

He recites it in a wet stage-whisper into her ear.

He doesn't come upstairs and she gets undressed quickly. She slips on a flannel nightgown; it swirls around her like a cape and in her mind she has an image of moving to one side of it. She gets into bed without brushing her teeth and pulls the sheet up over her head. In the dark she imagines her breasts are shrinking.

He calls her the next morning and wants to take her to dinner again. She is mystified by this sudden surge of interest. She makes up carefully, shadowing her eyes into haunting recesses. She arrives at the restaurant in layers

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of clothing. She peels off one sweater after another, until she is wearing only a thin blouse, and sits down. He watches her intently.

Your breasts are lovely, he says.

She has done it, has stepped again into the circle of his desire. But she is afraid. His interest in her is unpredictable. There are moments, like tonight, when he takes her in with evident pleasure, beaming at their luck, their cunning in having found each other.

Where does your wife think you are? she asks.

Tonight he doesn't even mind her determination to ruin things.

You're looking great, he says, especially your eyes. Did you know you could seduce a man with your eyes?

She is uneasy with his praise. And then because she knows it will please him, because she knows he likes what he assumes to be the tough, no-nonsense essence of her, she says, I hate intimacy. It always ends up by being a burden.

He nods thoughtfully.

Traitor, she tells herself, thinking of the day she sat by the river reading newspaper articles, piously, as though in them she could find extracts of consolation.

IN THE SUMMER, before he goes away, he takes her sailing on the Sound. The boat is painted in gay patriotic colours. She doesn't ask whose boat it is. He likes to dazzle her, a magician with a bagful of tricks. Scattered over his life, of which she is allowed only occasional glimpses, must be many such belongings: a villa in Spain, a box at the opera, a grove of pear trees.

She lies in the sunshine, licking the salty ocean taste off her lips, wearing a sedate bathing-suit. She is naturally shy about her body, but she plays it up for him, a man who appreciates modesty in women. Freckles sprout across her nose and cheeks. My cornflower girl, he calls her.

When she turns over to tan the back of her legs she observes him furtively: he is at the tiller, whistling, in a peaked sailor's cap. She imagines this is how he must have been as a boy, self-contained even in play, dressing up in the various costumes of manhood. She shields her eyes to see the ribbon of wake they leave behind them, rippling across the speckled expanse of blue. He turns around and waves as though they are travelling to separate places. She waves back, her hand flung high, the way she's seen women waving to their soldier boyfriends in the movies. She blinks in the strong light and notices how frail he appears against the horizon: she has grown used to the idea of his invulnerability.

They drop anchor off Fisher's Island. She is reading a biography of Madame de Staël. It seems important to her to know a lot, to collect information in protection against the encroaching and ever-increasing stock of facts—her feelings, his behaviour—beyond the realm of knowledge or ignorance. He comes and breathes down her neck. So that's how you fancy yourself, holding court, he says, noting the book. He is proud of her ambitions, the impatient tug of her mind. He predicts a golden future, heady accomplishments, the envy of others. His faith in her takes no account of her past, the unfading misery of childhood. Don't think about it, he says, it's over—dispossessing her of memory, denuding her of a cultivated inner life. There is no room in his scheme for unnecessary baggage, the detritus of suffering.

They sit on deck-chairs, in the bow of the boat. He pretends they are marooned on an island. He licks at her leg, feigning starvation. He tells her she would be his second choice for an island-partner. He won't tell her who would be his first.

He descends into the cabin and returns with two tangerines. He peels the skin off expertly and then feeds her the sections, one by one. She feels frenzied by the arrogance with which he alternately neglects and then repossesses her. She goes to inordinate lengths to disturb him.

Would you be sad if I died? she asks, suddenly.

Heartbroken, he says, covering her hand with one of his.

Really?

Of course, he says, I'd miss you.

The summer seems too long already, she says.

Some kinds of wishes are useless, he says with thinly-veiled impatience. Why don't you enjoy yourself now? Look at the sky.

Above their heads a trio of seagulls circles. She would like to fly away, crying "caw caw" along with them.

He pulls her head against his chest.

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Do you think it's too cold for swimming?

She doesn't answer.

Why do you always hang back? he asks, gently, as though he really wishes to understand. Leave things behind—people, places—if they bother you. Everything's negotiable. It's that simple.

How can she explain that she is puzzled by just this simplicity, this startling immediacy of engagement. It is a facility undeveloped in her —these adjustments made for the sake of comfort—a muscle atrophied from disuse.

He kisses her on the forehead. She cries into his shirt. She says her period often makes her cry.

He mops up her tears with unusual tenderness.

She finds him bewilderingly deficient.

Think of happy things, he says, stroking her hair, Can't you try and do that?

The Day I Drowned

The day I drowned was covered in sunlight;
The weather was breathless; I sat in a crook of the cliff,
You out of sight above me.
Dark blades of rock cut into the fleshy sea;
The light was strutting like peacocks.
All of a sudden
I was bunched, launched,
Staining the light in a long wait
Till I struck; then foot, flank,
Face were contending: here,
Called each of them, here, no here
Is the prow of feeling, the pain.

Then the body untwisting over and over,
Slowing and skewing, the salt nails
Thrust into nose, throat, lungs, one hand extended
Seeking the roots of rock, and here, no, here,
Each limb undoing the torso . . .

All this below me as I sat on my ledge,
On thorns and dry grass, the reassurance of rock,
Gazed on the water and drowned, enjoying the drowning.

This was the contents of the peacock weather,
This was the subject of sleep, this bunch and drop
Down to that turquoise surface.
I stood up,
Smiling, and climbed up the cliff,
Enjoying each limb in the sunlight,
to find you
Weeping and waiting, and my smile stopped
And drowned in your eyes.
We stood there, breathless in the breathless weather,
Not speaking, shaking with dread.

Laurence Lerner

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DAVID MARTIN

Revs and Revolutions

Church Trends & Theological Fashions

IT WAS Metternich who expressed blind unbelief in the idea of a liberal Pope. His lack of faith received its due reward. The liberal Pope, Pio Nono, turned reactionary, and liberalism was condemned in the Syllabus of Errors. Nevertheless later Pontiffs elaborated a distinctively Catholic version of social reform and John XXIII attracted the sobriquet "The Keynesian Pope."

On the Protestant side the evangelical 19th-century renaissance gave birth to a belief in the progressive establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, with preliminary instalments in Britain or in America according to taste. As for the Anglicans, Christian Socialism has been a live option for a hundred years (COPEC in 1924 and the Malvern Conference of 1941 were part of the inter-War impetus to social engagement). Archbishop Temple, who too briefly ascended the Chair of St Augustine in 1944, was an explicit socialist. With Tawney and Mansbridge he provided part of the Christian inspiration behind the Workers' Educational Movement. Archbishop Ramsey, who retired recently, was certainly well left of centre and probably helped form the political stance which now dominates the British Council of Churches. This stance is arguably continuous with a tradition of Christian "openings to the Left" now a century-and-a-half old. From such a vantage point the Laodicean attitudes of 18th-century squarsons seem more exceptional than typical. Before that was Cromwell, the Levellers and the social criticism of Latimer: the lineage even now claimed by Michael Foot and Tony Benn.[1]

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES could claim just this lineage. Certainly the membership of the WCC ensures a broad alignment with the Third World, to which most representatives of the first world give more or less hearty assent. Naturally racism has been a central issue for the WCC—this is where the liberal conscience and Christian universalism can stand together. The same holds for attitudes to the disparity between rich Northern countries and poor Southern ones. Race and poverty are moral issues which enable the WCC to take a clear position, without tangling too closely with the more vexed and ambiguous problems of economic organisation.

And what holds for the WCC also holds for bodies like the National Council of Churches in America, the British Council of Churches, or the General Synod of the Church of England. The upper echelons of the Church of England are now the liberal conscience at prayer. As Dr George Moyser (of Manchester University) has shown, members of the General Synod take the characteristic positions of the "left-liberal upper-middle class" to which they belong: on Race, on Homosexuality, on Capital Punishment. On all such issues the political profile of the Church of England is in stark contrast to the vigorous reaction found in large parts of the working class. Again, there is a much less radical stance to be found in the Synod when it comes to economic organisation. Like the majority of people in English society, including the working class, the General Synod wants no more instalments of nationalisation. There at least Church and People are at one.

THE SITUATION DEPICTED so far hardly seems alarming. Indeed, it is encouraging. A decent liberal of the old school would rejoice that the

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[1] Michael Foot is the son of a sometime Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, who was a member of the last Liberal Government, and a warm admirer of Cromwell. Tony Benn's mother—Lady Stansgate—was, and is, a very prominent figure in the world of Congregationalism. Benn sets himself directly in the Cromwellian tradition. Both Foot and Benn are, of course, leading representatives of the Populist Left of the Labour Party, and powerful voices in the Wilson-Callaghan Cabinets.

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Church is united with the party of humanity on the issues of race and poverty. Few people regret Christian opposition to authoritarian rule in South Korea, or Brazil or South Africa. It is presumably a matter for some congratulation that the Catholic Church has shifted out of the *intégriste* camp in Latin America, France, Spain and even Portugal, and that the old military style Protestantism of (say) Northern Ireland is quite untypical.[2] The war between *intégristes* and secularists belongs to a confrontation of Church with anti-clerical liberals which was first ameliorated in the second decade of this century and finally died down in the 1940s and 1950s. *Action Française* is dead and Opus Dei probably in decline.

If liberals can feel satisfied it is still possible for ordinary mild conservatives in the Anglo-Saxon tradition to find cause for comfort. But here one must pause. Conservatives and conservators come in so many kinds that it is an offence against clarity to identify them with any particular attitude. An Englishman who wants to conserve access to Catullus is not at one with an American who wants to prevent access to pornography. A conservative who thinks liberal education a waste of time has presumably more in common with a radical who wishes to leave every culture undisturbed in its pristine condition than with a conservative who believes that to be ignorant of Shakespeare and the King James Bible is to go through life maimed. The real issues of conservation and change cut right across the labels "conservative" and "radical" and it is tragic that discussion still continues in such terms. The existence of packaged alternatives in politics has thoroughly polluted the categories in which cultural politics are discussed, more especially as regards education and religion.

All the same, conservators and conservatives of very different persuasions take comfort from the patent fact that the attitudes propagated by the WCC and related Anglo-American bodies (the BCC and NCC) are often unrepresentative. Lots of politically conservative Americans, for example, believe the NCC does not reflect ordinary church opinion. That is one disjunction. Many Englishmen who want to preserve access to the classic liturgies and to the great translations of the Bible believe that the international ecclesiastical bureaucrats busy themselves with pedantic innovations which have no secure root in the feelings of persons in the pew. That is another and very different disjunction. The political conservative and the conserver of culture are both right in sensing the distance between the clerical organisation man and the people.

They are both wrong, however, if they suppose that the upper echelons of the church are impotent because unrepresentative. After all, the Left of the British Labour Party is largely made up of social élites quite unrepresentative of British opinion—but that will not prevent them imposing their will in the name and for the sake of the People. By the same token educational administrators have little contact with the aspirations of (say) working-class parents—but that will not inhibit them from imposing the trends current in their own social circles, to the great detriment of the majority of young scholars. Exactly the same applies to Ecclesiastical Bureaucrats. They are going to invoke "the People of God" and do just whatever seemeth good to them and the Holy Ghost. Dissenters and critics of all varieties take comfort at their peril. It is not enough to be a silent majority. The liberals are properly pleased to have captured the command posts of pronouncement and communication. The conservatives, of whatever kind, are falsely secure if they take comfort in numbers. Democracy profiteth them nothing.

And one of the reasons conservators in all their protean variety are so easily put down is that so-called liberals are adept at deploying the polluted categories of Left and Right, Conservative and Radical. There is a kind of "liberal" who is expert at undermining liberality, destroying liberal education, wrecking the liberal professions, pursuing every policy inimical to the liberty of the subject, and at displaying illiberal animus towards all who do not accept his package of approved opinions. Such "liberals" are dangerous, above all to those who wish to conserve liberality and liberty. Liberals of this kind are full of wind but somebody has to prick the balloon.

SO, ON THE ONE HAND, THERE IS great cause for satisfaction that the Church should have ranged itself with the party of humanity with respect to race and poverty. But on the other hand there is cause for alarm that many of the approved attitudes in the ecclesiastical élite, as in other élites, will in the end prove equally disastrous to liberty and to Christianity. The existence of virtue in one particular and very important direction does not guarantee a humane outcome to policies pursued in other directions. Savonarola was virtuous, but the consequence of some of his views was hardly humane.

Here are some examples of the distance between political cleric and "the rest" (Christian and non-Christian). The typical "radical" Christian despises the simple civic pieties of ordinary people. He is rightly suspicious of the stoic chumminess

[2] I have no wish to denigrate the kind of Christianity represented by Montgomery of Alamein, Wingate of Burma, Dobbie of Malta—or by the present Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Neil Cameron. But it is a fact that fewer and fewer Christians have any affinity with the kind of piety which is quite often found in the military caste.

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represented by "Scouting for Boys." He exalts the prophetic tradition, but forgets that in a whole millennium of Biblical history the number of prophets barely exceeded a dozen. The history of human aspiration is very much a history of civic and civil religion and one may assume that the average sensual man will concur with the pieties of his kind and find identity in the signs and symbols of his group. The admirable Rector of Bethnal Green in London's East End may declare "the People's flag is deepest red" but to most Englishmen, Americans, and Frenchmen for that matter, it is red, white and blue. The same point is true *mutatis mutandis* for Japan. A civil sensibility and a civic piety is not the whole faith delivered once and for all to the saints, but it is capable of expressing a decent sense of identity, and of loyalty, including—sometimes—loyalty to liberty.

The last point about loyalty to liberty is important. For political Christians to criticise and lament the crushing pressure of thoughtless patriotism is one thing. To lambast and denigrate the loyalties which provide the base of liberty is something quite different. Liberality draws deep on the well of conservation. The prophetic incision into cancerous patriotism easily cuts out the vital organs of identity and liberty at the same time.

THE SAME APPLIES to Christian criticisms of folk religion. To draw up the skirts of sectarian virtue and rectitude is to reject the very possibility of religious institutions informing culture at large. The core institutions of cultural piety are certainly being pushed in a sectarian direction, but—in the West at least—some Christians precisely desire the pure and costless righteousness of the sect. They want to accelerate differentiation—moral criticism could then be so easy and total. Moral parasitism could be embraced as a way of life and Christians could adopt moral postures as clean and pure as any

On Guerrilla Aid

". . . those wretched Churchmen: in a way one could respect them more if they went to Africa themselves to murder missionaries and children rather than hiring a pack of savages to do it for them."

Colin Welch
DAILY TELEGRAPH

RHODESIAN *guerrillas, who were blamed for the massacre in June of 13 British missionaries and their families in Umtali, are to receive a grant of nearly £50,000 from the World Council of Churches.*

The council, announcing the grant at its Geneva headquarters, said the money was being given to the Patriotic Front guerrillas of Mr Robert Mugabe and Mr Joshua Nkomo because the Rhodesia internal settlement was not leading to black rule.

The decision was immediately condemned in Salisbury by Mr Elliott Gabellah, black co-Minister for Foreign Affairs in the executive council, which now governs the country. Mr Gabellah said he was appalled that "so-called church organisations can give money to people who murder innocent black and white civilians in my country." He asked why the organisation did not give money to the "innocent victims of the terrorist war."

Bearing in mind that the killing of the 13 Britons was a particularly grisly affair, the grant may be the most controversial that the council has yet made to the guerrillas.

A council spokesman defended the grant, which brings the money given to the guerrillas since 1971 to about £75,000.

. "We don't believe the money will be used to buy guns", he said. "We don't even try to have any control over how the money is spent. We have known the Patriotic Front for many years and we believe they are responsible people."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES *is to reconsider its controversial policy of giving cash grants to guerrilla movements in southern Africa, following expressions of concern from churchmen in Britain and three other Western countries.*

But a grant of £62,500 to the South-West Africa People's Organisation will go ahead, and the £42,500 promised to the Rhodesian Patriotic Front has already been sent. The news that policy is being reconsidered was given by Archbishop Scott, Primate of Canada and Moderator of the World Council's executive, to leaders of the British Council of Churches.

He told me yesterday that the World Council had received protests from Britain, Canada, the United States and West Germany, which is the second largest contributor to the special fund to combat racism.

"We are not abandoning our policy of fighting racialism. We want to see if we can find a more effective way of demonstrating that policy, without giving rise to such concern.

"Some people feel that it would be better if we bought things first and then sent them to Africa. The reason we have not done this in the past is that we wanted to give these people some responsibility, to help them get used to the transfer of power."

Archbishop Scott added that he thought in hindsight that the World Council had not been firm enough in condemning atrocities committed in the guerrilla wars in southern Africa. But he said that atrocities were committed on both sides; and there was, in his mind, doubt about who had really committed some of the killings ascribed to the Patriotic Front.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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member of the humanist intelligentsia. For some Christians that is "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

Not merely do zealous political churchmen ignore or despise the undertow of the ancient pieties on which democratic sentiment reposes, but they adopt a political rhetoric which they direct with special fervour at Western democracy. Listening to this kind of pronouncement one would suppose sin merely an adjunct of capitalist organisation. Up to the Nairobi Conference in 1976 the totalitarian record of Eastern European countries rarely received the same prophetic scrutiny. It even seemed as if Eastern European Christians could go to hell so far as the World Council of Churches was concerned, provided the official representatives of Orthodoxy were allowed out to have their photographs taken at important ecumenical gatherings. Some clergy actually regretted the importunity of dissident Baptists and other awkward enthusiasts for faith and liberty.

The situation was, of course, not easy. The Orthodox were important for WCC strategy, and any contact with them, on whatever basis, seemed better than silence and separation. Eastern European Christians themselves were poised over a knife-edge, used as political ambassadors by governments which were ready to exercise a harsh domestic discipline should they play any uncalled-for variations on the role assigned them. The same pressures operated on the Christian Peace Conferences held in Prague, until peace finally descended on Prague in 1968. (The CPC has been recently revived.)

AT THE SAME TIME the World Council of Churches was influenced by the new theological thinking thrown up by the pressure of events in Latin America. Christian leaders increasingly resent the way right-wing governments either attempt to use the Church or else thrust it aside. Out of this has come a "theology of revolution" which transcends confessional differences. Theologians of Revolution pour new political potions inside the old wineskins, pressing traditional language to new uses. The problem here is how to know where the shift in meanings has crossed the frontier between social change promoted on a Christian basis and revolution walking behind a smokescreen of Christian vocabulary.

This is where the doctrine of the Eucharist provides a very sensitive indicator. Some revolutionary theologians understand the Eucharist as "God" realised in a communal feast. Others look forward to a revolutionary feeding of the fifty million to come in the new society, or else reject all celebration now until the transformed future makes celebration appropriate. The underlying problem for Catholicism in Latin America relates to the very different stages of development present in the same society. The result is a Church stretched out all the way from an archaic patrimonial religion of festivals and saints to the radical theology of middle-class revolutionaries. Nobody knows just how far Christianity can ride the Marxist tiger without being gobbled up, physically and conceptually, when "the time" comes.

Apart from the impact of Third World alignments, the politics of Orthodox participation, Revolutionary theology—and Black theology—there is the situation in Western Europe itself, more especially as concerns "Christian Democracy." This is an almost entirely Catholic matter, but religious changes have cooperated with other factors to undermine the stabilities created by "Christian Democracy" in the immediate post-War world. In most countries the church-going constituency has been relatively conservative in its voting habits; but over the past decade the stability of confessional voting has been more and more eroded, in Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere. The Church has become increasingly unhappy about Christian Democracy as the political arm of corporate Christianity and has complained about being caught up in a neo-liberal profane dynamism, more especially in West Germany. Thus the Roman Catholic Church in Germany has responded to the lessening of anti-clerical sentiment amongst the Social Democrats and has withdrawn from involvement with the CDU.

It was noteworthy that even in Portugal the Church wisely kept at a safe distance from the party which claimed a Christian label. Indeed, in Portugal individual Christians have taken up positions at most points of the political spectrum though the local priests in the north of the country made a signal contribution to the prevention of a Communist take-over. In most countries Christians have been repelled by the Communist Party itself, preferring to cooperate with free-ranging Marxists or going behind the Communist Party to join up with the extreme Left. Spain is somewhat exceptional in this. Not only has a huge sector of the priesthood shifted to a socialist alignment in the last decade, but there are numerous Christians associated with the Communist Party, more especially of course since it adopted a Euro-revisionist position.

HERE I COME MORE DIRECTLY to the political attitudes of the clergy, which commentators like Mr Clifford Longley of *The Times* in London think imply a major reorientation with consequences for Western culture at large. Any discussion of these attitudes must distinguish between Catholics and Protestants. This is because the disturbances of the past decade and a half have affected Catholics

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more intensely, in terms of declines in practice,[3] of alterations in the alignment of ecclesiastical power, of shifts in role specification, and of the cultural politics of liturgical change. The net result is that whereas Catholic priests were once the most anti-Marxist in their attitude, they are now quite prone to the Marxist seduction. By the same token, the Anglican Church—once labelled "The Conservative Party at Prayer"—has a powerful Left-liberal lobby and visible Marxoidal fringe.

The Protestant churches (meaning especially Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists) are relatively undisturbed and less likely to bend in the radical wind. Their traditional, established liberalism inoculates them somewhat against the ideological fevers ravaging their more ancient and hierarchical rivals. Protestant cultures are in any case resistant both to ecclesiastical doctrine and political dogma, and their experiential emphasis already anticipates the modern cult of experience. They have less far to go, and are therefore less inclined to hurry on the journey.

TWO POINTS NEED to be made before charting radical trends amongst Catholics and Protestants. One is that old-fashioned liberals in the Protestant dissenting world are pragmatically active in various movements of social change, even if they mostly lack the trendy overtone. They work, for example, in community politics in the USA. They take positive positions on the Women's issue. They are active against authoritarian government or racial injustice in various contexts (South Korea, South Africa). The exceptions are easily listed. One such exception is where Calvinist or conservative evangelical religion is linked to a culture under pressure, as occurs in parts of the US South, Northern Ireland, and white (especially Dutch) South Africa.[4] The other is where the paternal, even military, element in Calvinism remains potent, and this will result in somewhat conservative attitudes to the Women's issue.

The other point touches on the Women's issues as it affects the priestly traditions of Anglicanism and Catholicism. Here the roots ramify over three millennia. They connect role specifications in the priesthood with male and female images in Catholic iconography and dogma and also with role specifications in the culture at large as between male and female. These profound linkages require both a sociological probe and psycho-analytic

[3] These declines are documented to my knowledge for the USA, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Holland, France, Spain, Italy and Germany.

[4] There are now some discernible and heartening liberal stirrings in the Dutch Reformed Churches.

Alms for Arms

Nairobi

MINISTRY OF LOVE: **The Secretary of the Methodist Conference, attending the World Council of Churches Assembly in Nairobi, said that on the whole it was "worth taking the risk" to give money to African guerrillas. The risk, as the WCC has always admitted, is that the money might by used to buy guns and ammunition and not, as intended, help with medical aid and welfare.**

Mr Allan Shaw, a Methodist lay preacher, said yesterday that Black guerrillas fighting to overthrow the White régimes in Africa do so "in love not hate."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE: *Is some of the money put in the plate by British churchgoers on Sundays being used to finance the murder of missionaries and other innocent civilians in Africa? One would have thought that this question was dramatic enough to warrant a less drowsy response than that which it received from the British Council of Churches and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The council, it is true, expressed anxieties, dutifully echoed by Dr Coggan, about the precise administration of the funds devoted by the World Council of Churches to its campaign against what it is pleased to call "racism." But the grant of £42,500 to the Rhodesian Patriotic Front, against which the Salvation Army honourably rebelled, was approved on the ground that it raised "no new issue of principle."*

On what principle, then, do such contributions rest? Christians, surely, cannot be expected to subscribe to the view that "racism", alone among the sins to which the human heart is prone, is so vile as to make it legitimate to attack it by any means, however appalling. If the defence is that the WCC's money is not being employed to arm guerrillas but simply to tend, albeit selectively, the victims of a civil war, why is the expenditure of the money not supervised, as a matter of trust, by the council's agents?

What the resolution of the British Council of Churches on Monday made abundantly clear is that those who control this body are engaged, to say the least, in a highly contentious political campaign in Africa. They do not believe in the internal settlement and are in favour of the Anglo-American plan. It is not the business of Christian pastors to make such judgments, and the Church's true mission is now being grievously damaged by their irresponsibility in doing so.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Damaraland

PREFERENCES: **The Rt. Rev. Colin Winter, Bishop in exile of Damaraland, the South West African diocese, has attacked Mrs Thatcher, the Opposition leader, as "the Iron Lady of Right-Wing aggression." Writing in *Christian Action Journal*, the bishop said he would rather live in Cuba than Britain.**

After a recent visit to Cuba Bishop Winter says that country is a model of courage and determination to oppressed people.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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understanding. All that need be said for the purposes of this argument is that the unhinging of the linkages at the level of role and of religious images provides some of the psychic impetus behind the disorientations here described.

IT IS THE LINK between Church doctrine and Party dogma which provides the first clue to Catholic developments. Catholicism and Communism are both ideological *systems,* defining truth and excommunicating dissidents. Both have their bastions in relatively archaic, patrimonial social structures. Up to quite recently the Catholic system provided its priesthood with clear definitions of role and a secure anchorage for identity. Those definitions have become fluid—and once the bark of Peter shifted at anchor, many priests were sucked into a whirlpool. Some embraced psychic and political liberation at one and the same time, and were unable to check the impetus of their release from the old structure. There was an easy transition from an ancient system of compulsory beliefs to a contemporary system of required ideology. Simple piety easily became naïve political rhetoric, tripping off the tongue like a refurbished sermon.

Yet others fell into mere confusion and experienced a generalised fear of all authority and ritual highly congruent with the stance of the Left-liberal intelligentsia. They were unable to exercise the authority inherent in the priestly role, and became awkward charges on their parishes. Mostly they fled the parishes, preferring (for example) university chaplaincies where they could disseminate their preferred political opinions in a congenial atmosphere and help disorganise the constituency of young intellectual Catholics.

From the universities they had come, to the universities they would go. Life did not supervene. Their socialism exploited the evident if superficial analogy between medieval organicism and modern collectivism.[5] Their liturgical experiments combined echoes from the middle-class spontaneity cult with mandatory groupiness: the higher Buddyhood. This combination can generate contradictory thrusts: spontaneity pushes towards therapy and encounter while the groupiness can mutate towards the political cell. This mutation is particularly evident in some of the orders, especially the Dominicans. The shift from the monastic cell to the political cell is fairly easy. Some people enjoy being enclosed in both at the same time.

AT THE MOMENT the contradiction between the demands of revolutionary discipline and the thrust towards psychic exploration is not fully evident. This is because even the Marxoidal gloss is sentimental. Catholic Marxism, like a great deal of secular Western Marxism, is suffused with nostalgia. It rejects the homogenising thrust of modern industrial societies, regrets the vanishing crafts, the colours and graininess of pre-industrial life. Small is beautiful: intermediate technology, minority speech, or whatever allows the human scale.

The political cell, the commune and the monastic community, all share this human scale. For the Catholic there is the frisson of reviving the archaic in the context of the revolutionary. Anglo-Catholics within the Church of England exploit exactly the same frisson, and do so with a great deal of charm. Nostalgia can be given the gloss of the future as well as the glow of the past. This is very seductive and the defender of, say, the ancient language, traditions and rights of Languedoc need not wonder whether he is also an unwitting protagonist of Soviet hegemony. Romantic Catholicism can link hands with Romantic Revolution and no costs asked. The paradigm of all this is the pure white of the Dominican robe joined to the blood-red of the People's Flag. The *effect* is not to incorporate the Christian body in the revolutionary army—but to smudge vital distinctions and to soften up the frame of discourse.

Some Catholics observe the lack of serious Marxist spine behind this style of thinking and are aware that it can quite easily shift towards the plenary indulgences of the spontaneity cult, the indiscriminate appreciation of "cultures", and the inward-looking therapies of the sect. As one Dominican remarked about the new liturgical forms: "If the People of God stand in a circle, how can they be *en marche*? . . ." Yet if the Catholic "line" and orientation are unhinged, can it be reformed as a disciplined march to the future? (The same question was asked of the Student Movement: how far did it indulge *experience* at the expense of revolutionary discipline?)

THE ANSWER IS: It all depends. The future has become a key category in some theological thinking, whether Catholic or Protestant. Once theologians are deprived of faith they turn to hope, and hope frustrated converts to politics—or back to classic Augustinian realism. When God ceases to be transcendent he is re-embodied in the community and the future, more especially the community which marches forward into the future. Jesus becomes the teacher of this community, and is recast either as a hippy preacher or as a zealous revolutionary sympathiser. Or else Moses takes over, and rings the liberation bell, to lead the oppressed to the Promised Land. God participates in history, at first obscurely, and then achieves full revelation in the face of the Risen and Glorified People.

From this point on any number of symbolic

[5] The *"We believe"* which now supplants *"I believe"* in the Creed exploits just this organic root and the new collectivist possibility. Either way individuality is rejected.

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translations can be arranged. Marxism can be identified as the movement of the Spirit for Today and Tomorrow. Once "God" is dead a whole new resonance can be given to the idea of the Holy Ghost. Harvard's Harvey Cox, for example, has been notorious for finding holy and ghostly activity in whatever catches his lively political fancy. The difficulty is that these translations of transcendence first arouse euphoria and then deflate and empty the very dynamism they were intended to sustain. They are the fun thing for half a decade and then their proponents have to move on.

It is worth adding that the Marxist-Christian dialogue, for all its seriousness, involves tendentious translations of the classic texts on both sides of the divide. This was a point made over a decade ago by Alasdair MacIntyre. Marxists, straining to make sense of Christianity and to be open to it, easily distort both their own tradition and the religious tradition. The same happens to Christians who wish to incorporate Marxist perspectives. Marxism, after all, is not just a method of analysis and a movement for social justice: it is a new all-embracing ontology which cannot do business with error or tolerate regression to archaic superstition. I would here draw attention to a brilliant work by an American socialist and Christian, Dale Vree, *On Synthesising Marxism and Christianity*, which underlines the difficulties of the dialogue and the marginal character of those who undertake it. There is also a balanced and insightful account in Peter Hebblethwaite's *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and Beyond*.[6]

I TURN NOW more specifically to those manifestations of a radical clerisy which have appeared in Protestantism, more especially the Anglican Church.

The point of departure is two words: "conformist" and "establishment." But these words carry a heavy abusive charge, accentuated by their imprecision. They are calculated to strike additional terror into the hearts of clergy because

[6] Dale Vree, *On Synthesising Marxism and Christianity* (John Wiley, 1976); Peter Hebblethwaite, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and Beyond* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977).

Of Jesus & Jeans . . .

LAMBETH CONFERENCES *have been held roughly every 10 years since 1867. At that time the Anglican Communion, apart from the US Episcopal Church, must have looked very much like the British Empire at prayer. But today the Empire is no more [John Grigg writes].*

Jesus broke away decisively from the idea that God was only interested in the Jews. He also proclaimed the dignity of women and the blessedness of the poor.

Anglicanism now has a chance to show itself responsive to the Holy Ghost rather than to counsels of bigotry and caution.

SUNDAY TIMES

LAMBETH '78 is fundamentally about God and what He requires of man. That does not make for news [writes Patrick O'Donovan].

Dressed in their white rochets and scarlet gowns, as when they assembled in the sun for a spectacular group photograph, they look more august than the College of Cardinals. In conference they look like protest-minded dons.

A few are recognisable by their clothing as bishops, but open-neck shirts of every colour, with or without a pectoral cross, are more usual. There are more jeans than cassocks. One American wears a striped English rugby jersey, which is fashionable on campus there. At the last plenary, one arrived with tennis rackets. It gives a certain air of realism to their deliberations.

The conference seems to be trying to avoid the open politicising of the World Council of Churches. But under its brief, which is to attend on the will of God, it might be described as somewhat leftist. Very few participants are happy about the way the world is going.

THE OBSERVER

THE BISHOPS *lay aside large parts of the formal agenda and draw the world's problems into just about everything. Within the prescribed, traditional-looking confines they, in fact, subject themselves to all the quality-newspaper fodder. This, too, symbolises a general condition. To the first outside glance, Anglicanism looks trendy yet still recognisably traditional. But the beetle has been at work within the structure, and it is only the shell that remains. Like the officers of a sinking vessel, gathered upon an upper deck as their craft subsides beneath them into the depths, the bishops of the Church are still magnificent in their purple and titles; but they are not too far off from the water line [writes The Rev Dr Edward Norman, Dean of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and Lecturer in History at the University].*

There has been a major shift in the centre of Anglicanism since the last Lambeth Conference in 1968. It corresponds to a general reorientation of Christianity, and is usually discussed in the rhetoric of those concerned with the claims of the Third World. The centre of Christianity is moving to the Southern Hemisphere, and the bishops from the developing world, who in 1968 had all the glistening charisma of the deprived and oppressed, will this time have a very large numerical representation as well. They are listened to with immense respect—which is only right—but their opinions are, as it happens, merely an exported version of the liberal Christianity of the North Atlantic.

In the vibrant and attractive Christianity of Africa there is actually a large measure of traditional Christian spirituality. The African peoples have a lot

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the broad secular meaning overlaps the special ecclesiastical meaning. Lots of people in secular professions manage to be firmly "established" without knowing it or recognising it—so they are not at all frightened by the word. Indeed the Left-liberal establishment uses "established" as a dismissive term. It defends its established position by seeming to attack "the Establishment."

But the Anglican clergy are officially designated officers of an established church, and even Methodists and Baptists are socially quite well-established. Clergy can feel the stigma of establishment acutely, and long to repudiate such a compromising connection. It does not matter that few people are interested in the disestablishment of the Church. The point is that many clergy feel their credentials undermined by their secular entanglements and want to rid themselves of moral ambiguity. This moral ambiguity doesn't matter to the average sensual radical, who can be a successful lawyer or a wealthy author, or a richly rewarded denizen of the media, without suffering serious discomfort. It is only the ambassadors of Christian revolution who feel their credentials smirched by their ascribed social role. So they agitate for a return to the primitive condition of the Church before it became the religion of the Roman Empire. They set up a seductive symmetry between the pre-Constantinian Church and the post-Constantinian Church. Once Christianity recovers the role of radical sect it will rediscover its true mission and therewith its élan. Ambiguity will have been abolished and complication eradicated.

A MINORITY OF CLERGY are pushed in this direction by a new marginality of which they are increasingly conscious. They are being edged out of the old secure role in an understood social structure and yet are *still* inhibited from adopting an uncompromised, uncompromising oppositional stance. To live in near-apostolic poverty and be labelled a paid agent of the status quo is more than even Christian flesh can bear. To live courageously at the economic margin and have smart commentators hurl the casual adjective "conformist" is deeply hurtful. To misquote the old liturgy: the burden of pejorative adjectives is intolerable.

So established clergy seek ecclesiastical and

. . . the "Religious Malaise"

to teach the European world about the nature of religious experience, especially now that European Christianity has been reduced, by its own leaders, to a loose assemblage of moral platitudes. But the African bishops who turn up at Lambeth will not, in general, be the harbingers of the regenerated spirituality of their continent: they will be the Europeanised model of contemporary Christianity, stuffed full of social concern and calculated scepticism.

Visiting the parishes of their dioceses, the bishops are easily impressed by the random assortment of novelty worship and self-destructive discussion programmes which are regarded—not even with unconscious humour—as signs of "new life" in the churches. But in reality Christianity is becoming "marginated": it is moving to the periphery of society, where it will be, before long, indistinguishable from many comparable fringe activities of the bourgeoisie. The membership will encompass a large weird element: pacifists, consumers of organic food, friends of the earth, sexual liberationists and failed intellectuals.

The new styles of worship, and the reduction of the faith to an elevating scheme of social improvements, are very much the latter-day preferences of arts-and-crafts enthusiasts who have chanced to find in religion an unexpected acceptance of their tastes and instincts.

THE REAL DECLINE **of Christianity in this country is actually very frightening, not just because of how easily Christians have allowed themselves to be shaken, and by each minor gust of wind, but because of what the secular substitute for religion may turn out to be. That there is a crisis of religious belief is acknowledged by even the thickest of the bishops, but it is a sign of the advanced stage of the sickness that the leaders themselves attempt surgery with instruments contaminated with the very infection they seek to eradicate.**

"Otherworldly" seekers after a sense of the worthlessness of human values, failing to find satisfaction within the Churches of the Western World, are now observed grubbing around among esoteric and quasi-religious cults—astrology, spiritualism, transcendental meditation and the drug-induced fantasies of the bourgeois drop-outs. These, incidentally, have each in turn been taken seriously by professional theologians, anxious to learn from "alternative life styles": an interesting illustration of a general tendency—of the Church declaiming the virtues of its own replacement.

WORSE STILL, *and even more distasteful to have to record—but of the greatest significance for those seeking an understanding of the present religious malaise—is the loss of belief among some of the theologians and higher clergy. Far too many have actually lapsed from Christianity altogether yet retain their positions in the Church through the simple device of redefining the entire religion to make it correspond with their own latest opinions. Some now see "God" as little more than the trigger of human moral seriousness. For some others, the mysterious nature of the Divine has been sucked out and "God" is represented as some sort of impulse responsible for the physical universe—a new Deism, larded with Sci-Fi images.*

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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secular nonconformity, if haply they may find it. We are all nonconformists now, just as we are all Left-liberals. But this new cultural orthodoxy underlines a curious paradox. By adopting mandatory Left-liberalism the marginal cleric may succeed in repudiating the old establishment but he has also embraced the new one with open arms. He has levered himself out of the private school nexus and become a recruit to the kinds of conformity required along the marches of media and academy.

ONCE RECRUITED to these views and stances what then is required of him? Some new Commandments are given unto him, which may be stated as follows:

Thou shalt recite a daily service of commination against establishment, conformity, and the status quo.

Thou shalt not be caught out supporting causes also supported by the old establishment. This confuses things and gives the impression that truth is too many-sided to be bought in approved packages.[7]

Thou shalt be easily mistaken for a healthy-minded layman. This means taking off your clerical collar. On the other hand, when in church you may dress very fancy indeed.

Thou shalt jump to attention when addressed by a coloured person or a liberated female. (This is, of course, a way of patronising in reverse: to pay respect regardless of content).

Thou shalt evince a fashionable response to such terms as "self-realisation" and "self-actualisation" but not to competition or achievement.

Thou shalt espouse self-expression but not individualism, applaud community but not consensus.

This last commandment is the greatest, because it establishes a conformity to the true and living *words*. As Gibbon remarked, mankind is governed by names. The true and living words are essential to the with-it political clergyman. Indeed, the correct and persistent recitation of the true words is considerably more important than content or truth. The act of reciting the Proper of prescribed words and abominating the Improper of proscribed words is the basic rite of received political religion. By their vocabulary shall ye know them.

WHY IS self-expression all right and individualism anathema? Because "individualism" refers to the Protestant Ethic of thrift, initiative, self-discipline and the desire to achieve something in the world, while "self-expression" refers to the liberated self in authentic spontaneous dialogue and encounter with significant others. This is what the Marxist theoretician T. W. Adorno called "the jargon of authenticity", and up to quite recently radical sermons and pronouncements were spattered with this jargon.

Work inhibits, self exhibits. The self is characteristically exhibited in group encounter. Political religion dislikes the idea of the "Church" but loves the group. The group can be drawn out of society and, as observed above, is first cousin to the political cell. This is how liturgy comes to be deployed as a kind of slow-motion group theatre, a personal exhibition of aggressive cultural politics. A significant sector of liturgical experiment is a pure emanation of groupiness, carefully rubbing out the frames and spaces in which individuality was nourished and protected. These experiments are legitimated as returns to primitive practice; but they are the cultural politics of the 1960s carried on

[7] Bishop Trevor Huddleston did precisely this. He is a socialist but he also supported the *Festival of Light*, a movement against "moral pollution." This is not allowed.

Spaceley-Trellis Preaches Again

IN a sermon he preached in his cathedral last Sunday Dr Spaceley-Trellis, the go-ahead Bishop of Bevindon, strongly condemned the World Council of Churches for its decision to give £45,000 to the "Patriotic Front" operating against Rhodesia.

"The World Council of Churches," he said, "has suggested that this money be spent on welfare. Although it is possible that Dr Mugabe and the other ecumenical leaders of the liberation forces will in fact spend the money on arms, how can the World Council of Churches be absolutely sure that they do so?

"Would it not have been prudent to take no chances and send actual weapons instead, through whatever ecumenical channels are available, thus expressing the Church's concern for the Third World in terms which everybody can understand?"

To add force to his argument Dr Trellis brandished a sub-machine-gun, causing some of the less committed and compassionate among his hearers to duck beneath their pews.

Their names were taken by the Rev Paul Nordwestdeutscher, the Bishop's domestic chaplain and adjutant of the Bevindon diocesan militia which the Bishop is raising for operations in Southern Africa.

Peter Simple
DAILY TELEGRAPH

See Michael Wharton's satire "Dr Spaceley-Trellis", ENCOUNTER (September 1976).

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by other means. For example, one may or may not like the clutches, grips and handshakes which these days go under the name of the Kiss of Peace, but this kind of mandatory spontaneity is a version of the American feely-feelies and the group-grope. People are well and truly touched, made whole or maddened by the laying on of hands.[8]

The phrase "laying on of hands" may introduce one further curious feature of clerical zealotry. It exhibits a strong tincture of neo-clericalism. It often emanates from traditionally clericalist churches and revives the clerical attitude in plausible disguise. It exalts the *laos*, the People of God, but despises the congregation. The zealous political cleric often has as little real respect for the People of God as the zealous political academic has for the People. The People of God and the People always need to be liberated from sin or from false consciousness by the energy and foresight of the elect.

THE FORM OF THAT LIBERATION remains a problem. Some political clerics make the traditional appeal to personal responsibility; others rail against structural constraints. The former believe in the potency of goodwill, the latter in the malignancy of social arrangements, more especially those of Capitalist society. When goodwill patently fails there ensues a period of breast-beating and self-flagellation for which there is no absolution. Those who are confronted by the deep resistance of structures hunt for scapegoats and can find them in individual Christians, or in the Church as an institution, or in Christian doctrine. (Thus one very distinguished theologian, Gregory Baum, asked me what theological adjustments I had made since the politico-religious murders in Northern Ireland.) These febrile shifts, breast-beatings and searches for scapegoats arise because political realism in the Augustinian tradition has been forgotten. Naïve optimism turns compulsively through every circle of unhappiness, accusation and frustration.

There remains, at any rate, the basic contradiction. Part of the radical thrust is spiritual psychology and encounter ideology tuned to Christian instruments. It sometimes overflows in a political vocabulary, but contains little enough by way of serious political analysis. It may also overflow in courageous political witness, but there is still no serious assessment of what kind of society eventually is to be achieved by political action or what costs are to be met and values to be sacrificed *en route*.

SO, BASICALLY, THE POLITICAL CLERGYMEN are not really *en marche*. They are assembling the nicest possible ensemble of attitudes; and they are also softening up the frame of discourse. Political sermons disseminate a vocabulary and an accepted frame of discussion even though they are foreign to the complexities, paradoxes, ambiguities and unintended consequences native to political analysis and action.[9]

Yet their contribution to political attitudes and attitudinising should not be underestimated. Hard utopians know how to use soft utopians when "the time" comes. Niceness is not without penalties nor naïveté without costs.

[8] This particular rite either arouses enthusiasm or intense resentment, more usually the latter. Clergymen promote it while their congregations smoulder.

[9] There is a remarkable absence of non-Utopian analyses of the Christian political responsibility, in spite of the fact that many politicians are clearly groping about for it. The theme cannot be pursued here but it is eminently worth pursuing.

Metaphysics

A room. With books. With a half-dead rubber plant.
A typewriter, a telephone, two chairs.
Other evidence.
I stand in this room and I turn,
unseen by anyone I turn, clockwise, slowly,
—or quickly if you prefer—
completely around.
A definitive act, unarguably comprehensive.
I have faced the world, call it
a confrontation, call it an exposure,
call it a lie.

Bruce Berlind

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David Owen

Britain & Europe

At 6's & 7's, Between Nine & Twelve

BRITAIN is completing the sixth year of her membership of the European Community. The transitional phase of membership laid down in the Treaty of Accession came to an end on 31 December 1977, and our tenure of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in the first half of that year meshed us into the working machinery of the Community in a valuable and enduring manner. The years since Accession have steadily strengthened the ties of interdependence between the British economy and the rest of Europe. (In 1970 25% of our total trade turnover came from the other eight Member States, while in 1977 the figure was 38%.) Membership of the Community is now a fact of life for all sections of British society—industrialists, trade unionists, businessmen, financiers, farmers—and they are learning that it offers new opportunities and a new arena for action. The British stake is *firmly* set in the Community. The British Government's view of the Community is not the perspective of an outsider looking in, but a view from inside the Community looking forward.

For us now the Community is a basic and permanent factor of both domestic and foreign policy. But that does not mean that we regard the Community as a static organisation. The Community is developing and must develop further; it is our right and our duty to put forward views of our own on the course of its development and to offer them as a contribution to a debate that must concern every thinking citizen in Europe.

The British reluctance to adopt a specific concept of what we expect the Community to be is sometimes criticised or misunderstood. It is at root a question of national character. We find it difficult to commit ourselves to a formula, however impressive it may sound at first hearing and however comforting it may be to repeat. We want to be certain we understand its practical working and its implications. Grand designs do not appeal; we judge concepts from the well of our own experience. This does not prevent us from taking part fully in open discussions of ways of achieving greater European unity. We recognise the value of some sort of structure dividing responsibilities and functions between Member States and central organs. The British Government does not see the Community developing as a federation. I, and others, have used the word "confederation" and this is clearly nearer to being the appropriate label. But even this label has the danger of encouraging preconceptions, and giving the impression that we know and can predict the future. The European Community is an unprecedented venture by a unique grouping of nations; it is likely to evolve in ways entirely without precedent and forge a unique pattern. Its development will be the product of a whole series of pressures, successes, failures and above all conscious decisions on the part of Member States.

NO AMOUNT OF sincere commitment or evocation of the general principle of European union or the use of *communautaire* language can, or should, gloss over our failures to deal with the current areas that really matter. Success in these areas will do more for the real strengthening of the Community than any number of abstract inspirations. Human affairs are, of course, influenced by the manner as well as the substance of discussion—but the greatest influence comes from deeds. Honest open debate will do far more to stimulate the Community's healthy development and involve the peoples of our countries than will indifference masked by apparent consensus. There is no

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country where the real issues that will determine the future of the Community are more keenly debated now than in the United Kingdom, and I welcome this since I see it as a strength and not a weakness.

To achieve coherent—if not always "unitary"—development we need criteria for deciding which areas of Community policy to develop further, what new functions to give to the Community, and what mechanisms to use in carrying them out.

THE MOST SIMPLE and self-evident working principle is that the Community should operate where it has something particular to offer. In each area, we must choose between the instruments available to local, national and Community authorities and find the right level of decision-taking. This cannot be determined in an all-purpose or simplistic fashion. It is not a valid answer to argue that the Community should necessarily take over *every* problem that appears beyond the capacity of national governments to solve. A realistic view will recognise that some problems are simply intractable in present circumstances and with present means at any level of decision-making. Nor should we hurry to give the Community a function simply because it demonstrably *can* carry it out; the question is whether it *should* be doing it. If it is wrong to cede the Community powers automatically, it is equally wrong to refuse them automatically. We should be suspicious of the centripetal tendencies of all bureaucracies and the Commission needs to be challenged by the Member States when it appears to be taking decisions for no good reason, or putting too high a priority on "harmonisation" and not enough on the values of variety, difference, and regional and national choice. Nor should a given Community policy be opposed purely because it will be difficult, or will impose extra financial costs. The balance of advantage has to be worked out on a wider view, with political as well as financial elements, and it is often the hardest decisions that bring in the end the greatest rewards.

The British approach is, therefore, to look for cases where the Community can add up to something more than the sum of its parts—for example by pooling its political and economic authority in dealing with the world outside; where it can identify common standards and interests and accord them its authority; where it can contribute, through pooling resources and knowledge, to solving internal problems which Member States could not face so well in isolation, and thus help to even out inequalities to the general benefit; and finally, where it can offer a forum for consultation and discussion on matters which cannot yet—or perhaps ever—be forced into the rigid framework of a common policy.

The force and standing of the European Community are determined by how well it proves itself in areas like these. In practical, not abstract, terms the Community has in many fields already proved itself. It has become a weighty figure on the world stage and developed a distinctive personality of its own. The word "personality" is particularly appropriate, since it reflects the evolutionary or organic view of Community development which we in Britain find most natural and satisfying. Human personality is determined by both success and failure: a strong personality can put its failures to good account and build on the experience gained.

In every field of Community business, we can find apparent failures that hide a growing strength. I refuse to be despondent. I am not enamoured of the mood of defeatism that the Brussels Eurocrats so often engender. They dream of how people ought to behave and forget all too often the real world of how people actually behave. The Community's failure to agree on decisive steps towards economic union has been strongly criticised by some. But the issue is not only massively complex. Men of good-will differ not only on the analysis but also on the methods for achieving greater economic unity. The Community has learned to use its collective economic strength to good purpose in a world of international negotiation far more complex than the founding fathers could have imagined. It has set the pattern of a steadfast, constructive,

"Pro-Market"

Westminster

THE Prime Minister strongly defended Britain's membership of the Common Market—particularly the political advantages—in sharp contrast to his major criticism at the Lord Mayor's banquet when he attacked the funding and agricultural systems in the Community.

What was needed was "a broad balance between all the interests of the members of the Community" if its long-term objectives were to be fulfilled, not the imbalance that existed today, Mr Callaghan told MPs at Prime Minister's question time. "We should not talk about leaving . . . at this stage", he added.

When the anti-Market Labour MP, Mr Dennis Skinner, muttered that there were only six pro-Market Labour MPs left, Mr Callaghan retorted: "If there are only six left, I am one of them."

THE GUARDIAN

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and responsible approach to the multiform problems of the world economic order, whether it be relations with the United States, Japan, and the COMECON countries, the North/South dialogue, or individual developments like the Multi-Fibre Agreement. It has recently made a major contribution to getting the steel industry through the recession by cutting down on dumped imports and preventing cut-throat competition from driving down prices to a ruinous level. Internally, it has shown a solidarity that helped it maintain its unity in the face of (to date) its worst economic challenge with the traumatic 1973 oil price rise. It has taken the first faltering steps down the road of combating the economic divergence between Member States which remains the most serious obstacle to any form of economic or monetary union.[1]

The achievement of a European monetary system has been the dominant Community issue in 1978. For the five Member States who are already members of the Snake system, it poses no problems. But for France, Italy, Ireland, and ourselves there are important technical and economic issues to be resolved. Monetary stability is something we want and will work for both within the Community and in a world context. A refreshing aspect of the discussions in Britain has been that the criticisms as the negotiations proceeded were not coming solely from those who have always been anti-EEC, and advocacy of the system was on economic grounds and not confined to standard European sentiments. If the system is durable and effective Britain will participate fully. But our attitude will in any case be

[1] The introduction of the Regional Development Fund, the new borrowing instrument, and expanded lending by the European Investment Bank are positive steps but we are still a long way from producing converging economies; and the decision in principle to enlarge from Nine to Twelve will delay and could well hinder this development.

Catching the European Money Train

THE BRITISH *are belatedly realizing that the debate on the European Monetary System (EMS), besides being hellishly complicated technically, is also one of the major political landmarks in the history of the European Community. If we muff this one, as we muffed the inception of the Coal and Steel Community in the early 1950s and the European Economic Community in the late 1950s, we could find ourselves once more standing on the platform while the European train moves off.*

THE BRITISH **allowed themselves to be isolated in the negotiations, and once again the fatal indecision of the British as to their European objectives resurfaced, dismaying their colleagues and discrediting their negotiators.**

If it is clear to all that the United Kingdom is a loyal member of the European Community, and intends to remain so, her views on future policies will be listened to with respect due to her history and experience, and her special needs will be treated as sympathetically as those of, say, France.

BUT IF *the issue of membership is raised again, if doubts are cast on whether Britain really wants to be in the Community, if the possibility of a future "renegotiation" seems to arise, then even good British arguments will be spurned, and Britain's negotiators will find themselves in a permanent minority of one.*

This is the danger which has now arisen on the EMS, encouraged by the upsurge of mindless anti-Europeanism on the Left.

THE VIEW **seems to be emerging in Whitehall that the United Kingdom can join the EMS or keep inflation within single figures during 1979, but not both; and that the fight against inflation must take priority. But this is a false antithesis, and by making it we risk losing both battles. For if the EMS goes ahead without us, the blow to sterling's credibility could be severe; and a major movement of foreign funds out of London into EMS capitals (Dublin, for example?) could itself precipitate the sterling devaluation seen by many as a pre-condition for joining.**

OUR REFUSAL *sets up a chain-reaction which exposes the weakness of sterling; the defences against inflation crumble; and we find ourselves obliged to enter the EMS at a later stage on the very terms we had earlier rejected.*

Improbable? Isn't this exactly what happened with the Coal-Steel Community and the Economic Community?

WITH OR WITHOUT **Britain, the EMS in some form is going to go ahead. It would be much better for us and for Europe if Britain were in it. We cannot go in under any conditions, but our objective should be, unequivocally, to ensure that the conditions are such that we can go in.**

By bad handling of the negotiations so far, we have been pushed into a corner; and there is not much time left. If we are to get a hearing, we must make our intentions and our good faith clear to all our partners.

Michael Shanks
in THE TIMES (London)

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constructive and certainly not one of principled opposition.

If the Community has not achieved anything like a political union, it has abundantly proved its political personality in the magnetic attraction it has exerted—as an association of democratic states—on the new democracies of Southern Europe. It has spoken with one voice on the vital topics of world politics, thanks to the vigorous development of political cooperation in parallel with the institutions set up under the Treaties. The Treaty institutions themselves have matured, developed and shown inventiveness in many ways, including some not foreseen by the founding fathers. Perhaps the most important example is the thrice-yearly meetings of the European Council, giving the overall impetus and political direction to Community life that inevitably stems from involving the Heads of Government directly in Community affairs.

Some people believe that direct elections to the Assembly to be held throughout the Community in June next year will greatly strengthen the democratic voice in the Community and that it will be far better placed to scrutinise the activities of the Commission—and to influence the Council of Ministers. History will show.

My own view is that the impact of direct elections has been greatly exaggerated—they will have a growing influence, but this will take longer than most anticipate to develop and there are real dangers in overselling this modest but probably inevitable development. Great care will be needed to avoid isolating the Assembly and its members from the national Parliaments, national MPs and parties. If it is to become a real *Parliament* it must be able to reflect the clash of national interests as well as the aspirations of a developing European identity. And it is essential that the Assembly work *with* the Council to improve the Community rather than setting itself up as a rival.

ON EXISTING POLICIES, it is well known that Britain finds a good deal to criticise. It is important to appreciate that this does not mean we are attacking common policies as such, still less the proposition that these matters should continue to be decided at Community level. What we are trying to do is, indeed, to *renew* and improve existing policies so that they can continue to form a "hard core" of Community activity into the foreseeable future. To do this they must fairly represent the balance of interest both among Member States in the Community of Nine and among the different groupings in the population of each Member State.

A FACT which must be borne in mind, and it is too often ignored, is that Britain—with a GDP per capita lower than that of all other Community members except Italy and Ireland—already makes (even before the termination of the special budgetary transitional arrangements in 1980) a larger financial contribution to the Community than any other Member State except Germany. In 1976, leaving monetary compensatory amounts (MCAs) aside, we were the second largest net contributor to the Community budget. Even counting MCAs—which is not strictly justified, since they are not a subsidy to our budget balance—we were still the third largest net contributor. The disproportion between British contributions and receipts has grown wider since 1976 and will continue to do so until 1980, when our net contribution is likely to go up to over £800 million.

As a major contributor we are bound to be amongst the critics of foolish schemes, extravagant subsidies, and nit-picking interference in the name of out-dated *laissez-faire* attitudes.

We approach the reform of existing policies in a constructive, not a carping spirit. The main examples are the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy. The reasons for our special perspective on the *CAP* are rooted deep in our social and economic structure. With only 2.7% of our working population engaged in agriculture in 1975—France in the same year had 11.3%—and with our massive dependence on imported food supplies, we necessarily take a different view from those countries which gave priority to stabilising agricultural incomes and easing the social transformation involved in the slow flight from the land. For us "consumer interests" have the historical importance which "producer interests" have elsewhere. What we are seeking is a policy that will justly reconcile the interests of both; the key to this is reforming the features of the *CAP* which produce uneconomic, unwanted, and costly surpluses. This would self-evidently benefit Britain, or at least remedy the negative effects on us of present policies. But it would also provide a sounder and more cost-effective basis for agricultural policy in the Community as a whole and allow the Community to develop a more effective policy for Mediterranean agricultural problems.

What we cannot do is to continue to see a rise in

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the percentage of the Community Budget devoted to agriculture. It is now about 75%. When Britain was negotiating entry the Commission forecast a drop to between 40–60% by 1978. The industrial Community Budget is still far too small and Finance Ministers have insufficient control on the annual farm price fixing process. At last we are reducing its average percentage increase but the price fixing is little more than a crude national haggle amongst Agricultural Ministers and has no long-term economic and social strategy against which to work, no budgetary ceilings in which to operate. West German farmers have done very well out of the *CAP* and the Bonn Federal Government has allowed this to distort their advocacy of changes to the *CAP* which would be in the interests of the whole Community and the majority of their own people.

The Common Fisheries Policy, we believe, must take account of the fact that about 60% of all the fishery resources in the European Community are within the new international 200-mile zone over which Britain exercises jurisdiction. This is not just a matter of reforming the existing policy, designed to operate before the 200-mile extension, but of building upon it to create for the first time a truly Community approach to the management of fisheries resources. The Community is here facing a historic opportunity to come to terms with reality and recognise that the policy cobbled up by the Six in 1970 not only lost Norway as a member because of the impact on their referendum: but is resented in Britain as being insensitive to a legitimate national interest. In view of the exclusion of Britain from its traditional fishing areas such as Iceland, following the introduction of the 200-mile limit, it is inconceivable that the 1970 policy can continue unamended into the 1980s. I believe an understanding of the need for the Community's fisheries policy to be accepted as fair by the one Member State contributing the majority of the resources is a fact of life that will have to be appreciated.

THE GREATEST CHALLENGE facing the Community is arresting present trends of divergence between the economies of Member States, developing a joint approach to the pressing problems of growth, inflation, and unemployment and working positively to even out inequalities existing between Member States. Habits of economic coordination and consultation are developing which should help us to understand how each other's economies work and how best to keep them in line once we have got them working together. It is important to ensure that policies in this area are consistent, giving due weight to social as well as economic factors; and in the present

"Break-up in 5 years?"

Bonn

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT *of West Germany believes that the Common Market will "destroy itself" within five years if it cannot stabilise its currencies. Hence his determination to press ahead with the European Monetary System (EMS) plan whether Britain joins it or not.*

The Germans seem largely reconciled to the prospect that Britain will stay outside this stable-currency club, due to come into effect on Jan 1. But in Bonn's view the British themselves would be the main losers if they refused to join. As one authoritative German source put it: "If you British stay out you will have a lower standard of living than the Italians within three years." With more sadness than anger the source added that Britain had "made all the mistakes" in her dealings with Continental Europe over the years.

HERR SCHMIDT HIMSELF *was rather more tactful in his speech at a Foreign Press Association dinner in Bonn on Monday. But even he betrayed his impatience with British hesitations when he said that there had been no fewer than four phases of negotiation on terms for British entry to the EEC since the 1950s.*

There now seems to be a growing feeling in Germany that Britain is a churlish and unreliable European partner. Countless Germans, including the Bundesbank in Frankfurt, would feel more reluctant to subsidise British entry into the EMS than to transfer resources to a more European-minded weaker country such as Italy or Ireland.

In his on-the-record remarks Herr Schmidt conceded that he had changed his mind last year on the feasibility of a currency "snake" at a time of divergent inflation and growth rates. But the decisive factor was not inflation but balances of payments.

Describing the thinking behind the EMS, jointly promoted by West Germany and France, Herr Schmidt recalled that when the Rome Treaty setting up the Common Market was signed in 1957 "we assumed fixed exchange rates." But since then each member country had pursued different economic, fiscal and monetary policies. For more than five years European currencies had been separated. It was as if each of the 11 German Federal States has its own money, constantly shifting in value against the others.

BECAUSE OF these divisions and uncertainties, trade had expanded more slowly within the Community than outside. If this went on unchecked it would break apart within five years.

David Shears
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH

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uncertain economic climate very high priority must be given to measures to achieve non-inflationary growth and thus alleviate unemployment. We have accepted that we cannot cling to the already overturned raft of *laissez-faire*—we are beginning to talk the new language of orderly marketing arrangements and of intervention, and we must not become Old Testament theologians whose ability to respond to new situations is restricted to interpreting the very letter of the Rome Treaty. Free trade is not absolute in the Community, or, I may say, elsewhere.

I am the first to advocate selective measures to restrain and support some of our more fragile industries when they are needed. Market disruption is a fact of industrial life. Protectionism is not some future threat but is a current reality; distortions to free trade are rampant, discriminatory administrative arrangements, subsidies, monopolies, artificially manipulated exchange rates, disguised tariffs are all present. The unemployed in our own community will not allow us to see their interests sacrificed by super-competition which they have no hope of meeting. We must face international marketing realities not as individual Member States but as a Community. Of course we want to continue to enjoy the benefits of growing trade—we also want progress on world economic growth rates, currency stability and inflation. We cannot consider these issues in isolation.

ONE FIELD in which Britain has worked hard for progress in the past, and hopes to play an equally constructive rôle in the future, is that of the Community's own financial system. However unglamorous, this is a key sector of Community business since the common Budget is after all the vehicle for all common policies. Britain took the initiative over improving financial control in the Community, and pressed for the speedy establishment of the new European Court of Auditors which finally started work in October last year. The VAT Sixth Directive, creating the harmonised base necessary for completing the own-resources system, was adopted under our Presidency and the UK and Belgium were the only two Member States to put it into force by the end of 1977. A great deal of groundwork for the transition to full own-resources, introduction of the European Unit of Account, and updating of Budget procedures through a new Financial Regulation was done under the British Presidency during the first half of 1977.

Another area where we are still very much at the embryo stage of a common policy is energy. Energy resources are just as vital for the Communities in the present decade as iron, steel, and agricultural produce were in the 1950s. That is not a reason to construct an energy policy on the same lines as the Common Agricultural Policy. Heaven forbid! But it is an incentive to devise a policy that takes full account of both relative needs and the size of relative contributions. A Community preference for coal, for instance is at least as valid and viable an idea as a Community preference for milk or beef; and it would have the merit that all the supplies in question would find ready consumers.

THE COMMUNITY'S working machinery, without which the best devised policies would be impotent, is an area of great sensitivity to us, and we are not alone in this sensitivity. It is shared in particular by France and Denmark, but I suspect is present in great measure in all Member States. The British objective is to maintain and develop Community institutions which are fitted for their tasks and can perform them efficiently, with a logical division of responsibility, but also in a way that is clear, open, and responsive to democratic influence.

Democratic control is not an obstacle to the growth of Community policies, but a vital contribution to its growth. Even the best policies will not work if they are misunderstood and resented by those they are meant to benefit, or applied from above without any sensitivity as to their impact. If ordinary people in Britain and elsewhere are to support and cooperate in Community policies it is essential that they should understand and sympathise with them. Without such understanding the noble dream of "a citizen's Europe" will be marked only by the empty rhetoric of the despairing speech-writer.

Some argue, desperate for a quick cosy solution, that we can make a short-cut to efficiency by rigidly applying and further extending the provisions in the Treaties for majority voting in the Community. It is not a view that Britain supports. Council meetings already operate an informal effective majority voting system. While seeking to solve problems by consensus, those who find themselves in the clear minority constantly defer to the majority unless very important questions are involved. Automatic majority voting will destroy the pursuit of consensus; it will reduce the need for argument and reduce the give and take in the

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Councils. The right of any Member State which sees important national interests at stake to ask for discussion to be continued until a consensus has been reached, which is effectively the "Luxembourg Compromise principle", is in our view a vital part of a living and democratic Community. Even Luxembourg finds a decision over the siting of the Parliament to be a vital interest, and understandably so. Abuse of this system by invoking it on minor matters can usually be dealt with by other indirect sanctions and linkage which Ministers understand and operate.

It is the bureaucrats who love majority voting because it is tidy—it means decisions are taken on time. It is all right for the Commission to advocate it, appointed by and answerable to no electorate as they are. Its advocacy by politicians usually stems from their own conception of the Community which is essentially that of the federalist. They are entitled to their views and should be treated with respect, but it is at least at this stage in the Community's development a blind alley along which we would be unwise to venture.

Voting aside, there is no shortage of means to speed up Council procedures if we have the imagination and political resolve to look for them. During the time of the British Presidency last year several steps were taken to improve efficiency, with the Committee of Permanent Representatives playing a key role in preparing the ground for resolution of minor problems and thus letting Ministers concentrate at their meetings on the larger issues; although to use the Council Secretariat for finding a synthesis between the views of Member States is also something worth developing further. We do not want a permanent Council bureaucracy which will only vegetate and atrophy. It would help if Member States which have the necessary resources could second good people for four-year spells to strengthen the existing team.

THESE ARE SOME of the main elements—by no means an exhaustive list—in a confident but pragmatic British approach to the future of the Community.

Britain is among the foremost in welcoming new members to join, since we believe they will be joining not a "rich man's club", but a nucleus of democratic states who are determined to turn the dangers and difficulties of a modern world into a constructive future. Enlargement to a Community of Twelve—with Greece, Portugal, and Spain—is a great issue and a fundamental challenge to the Community. The arrival of three newcomers will undoubtedly lead to costs and to other problems for the existing Member States. But a rebuff to the new democracies would cause incalculable harm to Community and Western interests generally; and, in the British view, the political imperative for admitting them to the Community is overriding. Enlargement to 12 will reinforce the democratic structure in these States at a crucial stage in their evolution, will enlarge the influence of the Community and strengthen Western Europe and thus the foundations of world peace. It is an enterprise which brings together all we see as best in what the Community has to offer the world; and what Britain hopes to offer as part of that Community.

Giraffes

Earlier, licking the wood posts
Of their compound with grey
Slug tongues, or loping
In formation across the grass
Like a troupe of long-legged dancers,
The giraffes appeared so daft.

But now, as the rain begins,
And people rush for shelter
Like a crowd of panicked penguins,
The giraffes watch coolly
From their stately necks
With an air of condescension.

Vicki Feaver

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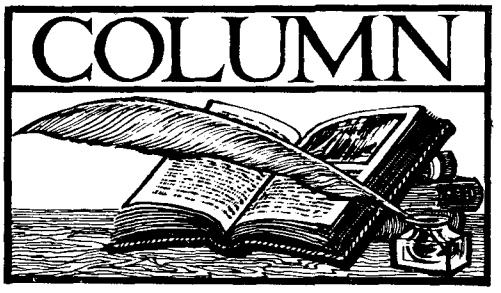

GERMANY and the German people still constitute a baffling problem to the historian, more especially if he tries to incorporate into their growth and development the nightmare figure and career of Adolf Hitler. As Karl-Heinz Janssen, discussing a conference at Aschaffenburg on "Controversies of Contemporary History", has recently shown in ENCOUNTER (November 1978), for historians Hitler is a stumbling block which they have not yet successfully overcome. It is as if there was some daemonic element in him which refuses to conform to the ordinary categories of history, wandering or bursting into it from some different stage from that on which it is usually enacted, and playing a part to which only art rather than history could do full justice. Despite the tremendous efforts of research and enquiry which have been expended on him, especially in recent years, he still remains a figure on which historians have singularly failed to reach agreement; and at the present time the Germans, in an effort to understand themselves and their own history, are the first to demand insistently that they be given some rational explanation of the process by which he was enabled to play such a catastrophic part in their lives. Yet he obstinately insists on remaining elusive, enigmatic, incomprehensible, as if he sprang from lower depths of existence than those in which the historian is accustomed to venture, and embodied some hideous and hateful principle of life, which the historian cannot quite get into focus. There are moments in which he resembles some creature from outer space, like a peculiarly sinister and frightening creation of science fiction.

If this is so, it is certainly not from lack of historical knowledge or evidence, for by now there are few aspects of Hitler's career and personality which have not been subjected to the most meticulous enquiry and research. Yet somehow there seems to be some unknown dimension lacking in our understanding of him, so that historians will have to continue the task of trying to explain him, of bringing him within the recognised categories of historical thought. Otherwise we should have to accept that history is a process of which even in theory no rational explanation is possible, but merely a random sequence of events in which we can find no intelligible relation between *before* and *after*. For what kind of process can it be which is subject at any moment to the intervention of personalities which in no way conform to the rules by which we normally try to explain human experience, and are the embodiment of miraculous and mysterious forces of a particularly evil and malevolent kind?

And so indeed it may be. But if so we must abandon any attempt to understand either our past or our present, much less our future; and this is in some sense to diminish the dignity of human beings, because it reduces both past and present to "a tale told by an idiot . . . signifying nothing. . . ."

FOR THE GERMANS especially, the attempt to come to terms with the phenomenon of Hitler and Hitlerism is an urgent and pressing need, for to try and understand it is also an attempt to understand themselves. One should therefore welcome rather than deplore the almost obsessive interest in Hitler displayed in Germany at the present moment, especially by the younger generation, from whom the known facts of the case have very largely been concealed. It is a manifestation not of nostalgia for past dreams and fantasies, but of an effort to achieve a genuine understanding of their past and, as a result, of themselves.

To such an effort invaluable contributions have been made, in recent years, not only by historical scholarship but by the media, whether cinema, press, television or radio. Indeed one might say that it is one of the most encouraging signs of the health of the German people today (or at least to those of them to whom free access to knowledge and information is still accessible) that at no time in German history has the spirit of self-criticism and self-examination been so active and alive as it is in the Federal Republic today. Yet perhaps there is a danger that sheer concentration upon the career and personality of Hitler himself, and on the movement which led to both triumph and defeat, may prove to be self-defeating. For, after all, the fundamental problem is not so much that of Hitler himself, who from a certain perspective can be regarded as a kind of scum thrown up by history, but of how precisely he can be related both to Germany's past and equally to the hopes of the German people both for the present and the future.

The problem is certainly a formidable one, and little help is provided in finding an answer by journalists like David Irving, who cheerfully admits that the primary motive for his work is to make money. The problem is too difficult to be solved as easily and profitably as that. For after all, there are millions of Germans living today who have had personal experience of no less than five totally different political régimes. By comparison, the life of a Frenchman of the same age might be said to present almost a model of stability and continuity.

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It would seem indeed as if German history were nothing except a sequence of contradictions.

Again, there was a time when one might reasonably have said that the three greatest representatives of the German past were Luther, Goethe, and Bismarck. All three left upon Germany a mark by which hardly any German has remained wholly untouched, directly or indirectly; yet they represent forces so diverse and conflicting that it is almost impossible to reduce to any kind of unity the contribution which together they made to the development of Germany, and the Germans, as a whole. If today one has to add to these three the name of Hitler, as his followers (who once included the majority of the German people) would claim, it is not surprising if any student of Germany may be inclined to throw up his hands in despair when contemplating this extraordinary nation, whose history seems to follow no intelligible pattern, and whose historical experience is so overwhelmingly, almost suffocatingly rich in every kind of paradox and contradiction, of culture and barbarism, of the very primitive and the very new, of pure idealism and the crassest kind of philistinism, of magnificent music and poetry combined with most naked and ruthless forms of the struggle for power, of the strictest kind of self-discipline and dedication to ethical ideals together with an underlying anarchism and nihilism which at any moment, given the opportunity, are ready to break through to the surface.

It should be a matter of congratulation that at the present time so much has been done to try and achieve a reconciliation between these opposites, however temporary or precarious it may prove to be, and even though, in contemporary Germany, a wave of the grossest materialism may threaten to engulf all such efforts.

YET IN THE ALMOST METAPHYSICAL JUNGLE of German history and experience one sometimes comes across particular aspects of them which seem to provide some kind of guiding light into the darkness of its undergrowth, and when one does so one should be correspondingly grateful.

I myself have not, in this respect, recently encountered anything which seemed to me at once so absorbing and so illuminating as Mr Nigel Hamilton's admirable book, *The Brothers Mann*,[1] because the lifetime of these two sons of a rich, successful, and patrician Senator of what was once the Free City of Lübeck covers the period, from about 1870 to the end of the Second World War, when all the contradictory forces in German society seemed to break out of control and fatally combined together to drive the German people into a "Time of Troubles" which, under an appearance of glory and triumph, finally led to almost unparalleled disaster and shame.

Both brothers were destined to pursue careers of the greatest possible literary distinction, and the younger, Thomas, to become the greatest novelist of his age. It is perhaps a sign of German capacity for sudden, radical, and often capricious decisions, that their father, the respected Senator of Lübeck, having become convinced that neither of his sons had either the capacity or the will to succeed in his own highly successful business as a merchant, directed in his will that on his death all his varied commercial enterprises should be liquidated, all his property in Lübeck, house, offices, warehouses, wharves, should be sold, and the proceeds devoted to the maintenance of his wife and children. It was almost as if the Senator had decided that there was no future in Lübeck either for his sons or for the enterprises to which he had devoted his entire life.

His decision left his family free to leave the constrictive atmosphere of Lübeck, but not before Thomas had absorbed enough of the manners and morals of a proud, isolated and declining provincial city to describe them with penetrating insight, which did not exclude sympathy, in his early masterpiece, *Buddenbrooks*, which was the foundation of his fame. In his brother, Heinrich, however, the same air of provincialism, philistinism, reaction and complacency, which, after leaving Lübeck, he breathed again in other German cities, and identified with the German bourgeoisie as a whole, provoked a different reaction. In his novels, *Professor Unrat* (which after the War provided the basis for one of the most famous and representative films of the 1920s, *Der Blaue Engel*), and *Der Untertan*, he brilliantly satirised German society and henceforward turned, with a rare courage and consistency, to French ideas of rationalism, liberty and democracy which were in everything opposed to the evils which, in his eyes, flourished so luxuriantly in Germany.

Both brothers recognised each other's outstanding literary gifts, and the elder accepted, without envy or jealousy, that the younger's were even greater than his own. They were united by strong bonds of affection and mutual regard, but even so close a relationship could not conceal the profound differences in their attitudes to society, to art and to life. Even before the First World War, Thomas had detected in *Professor Unrat* a love of French as opposed to German ideas which he deplored, and this had caused a breach which only deepened when, in 1915 Thomas published an article, "Thoughts on the War", which he later expanded into his famous *Reflections of a Non-Political Man*, published after World War I, when Germany had already been defeated.

Reflections of a Non-Political Man was an almost hysterical rejection of everything in which Heinrich believed and some of its more extreme

[1] *The Brothers Mann*. By NIGEL HAMILTON. Secker & Warburg, £9.75.

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passages were recognisably directed at Heinrich himself. Despite Germany's defeat Thomas continued to celebrate the War as a death-struggle between *Kultur*, which is a property of young and vigorous peoples, who are still close to the primitive sources of their strength, and the corrupted and decaying civilisation of the West, an outbreak of the orgiastic and Dionysiac spirit represented by Germany against the Apollonian rationalism of the French, a *frisch und fröhliches Krieg* in which profound sources of spiritual renewal were at work.

Despite its title, which reflected the typical German intellectual's fatal contempt for politics, there is nothing in *Reflections of a Non-Political Man* which would not have been acceptable to the most extreme Pan-German nationalist. Hitler himself could have written it, if he could have written so well. Yet it undoubtedly expressed something which was deeply embedded in the consciousness or subconsciousness of nearly all Germans, even those who professed devotion to liberal and progressive ideas, and this fatal dichotomy between mind and spirit was one of the primary causes of the continuous series of defeats, often self-inflicted, suffered by German liberalism.

Heinrich was rare among Germans because of the clarity, consistency and tenacity with which he opposed everything to which his brother had committed himself. For him war and defeat were a Nemesis which Germany had wilfully incurred by its own blindness and arrogance. The breach between the two brothers deepened, despite their mutual affection, and it was not healed until Thomas at length accepted, though typically enough not without certain reservations, that he had been wrong and Heinrich right, so that he eventually embraced Heinrich's beliefs as passionately as Heinrich himself. Even so, however, he still preserved a certain detachment in his attitude to politics, and a certain serenity in contemplating even the greatest sufferings which are among his most remarkable attributes as a writer.

THUS IT COULD BE SAID that the story of the two Mann brothers had a happy ending; and since in so many ways it mirrored the history of their times, so that the series of disasters which befell their country seems to be reflected in the series of personal tragedies which the Mann family itself suffered, so one might hope that the reconciliation effected between the two brothers foreshadowed a similar reconciliation which has now taken place in West Germany between the conflicting forces out of which it has emerged.

It is, of course, possible to take a different view. One might say that the era of freedom, democracy, and pragmatism which has established itself in the Federal Republic has only been made possible because it has been torn apart from the East, which has traditionally been the cradle and the home of German authoritarianism, militarism, and autocracy. But it is difficult to believe that so crude a piece of surgery could really constitute a permanent cure for the profound psychological and psychical conflicts which have divided Germans for so long, both in their relations with one another and within their own breasts. Such an act of healing could only come about as the result of a genuine reconciliation such as took place between the Mann brothers. Indeed, at the present time, it does not seem fanciful to suppose that on some not far distant date the *Furor Teutonicus* may break out once again, only this time under the benevolent tutelage and supervision, and with the active participation, of the Soviet Union.

Thus there may be an alternative ending for Germany from that which the Mann brothers found for their own story. Yet that story will retain its fascination because, despite the immense differences between them, in character and temperament, in attitudes to life and literature, most of all perhaps in the degree of their capacity to commit themselves to purely political principles, they were both profoundly German, and between them give us a kind of double perspective on Germany's past and perhaps her future. Heinrich derived from the French Revolution and the Germany of the Enlightenment which was its child, and from the Revolution of 1848: and though the ideas which inspired these movements were doomed, in Germany, to successive defeats, this does not make him any the less a German. Thomas, though capable of a severity and detachment which reminds us of the Goethe he so greatly revered, was also a child of German Romanticism, and his profound understanding of the forces it embodies, and of its capacity both for good and evil, was one of the fundamental sources of his greatness as a writer. It was this also perhaps, which made him capable, in his *Dr Faustus*, of providing us with the most profound imaginative insight we possess into the German society of which Hitler and National Socialism were the product.

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Douglas Dunn

Remembering Lunch

Noticing from what they talk about, and how they stand, or walk,
That my friends have lost the ability or inclination to wander
Along the shores of an estuary or sea in contented solitude,
Disturbs me on the increasingly tedious subject of myself.
I long for more chances to walk along depopulated shores,
For more hours dedicated to fine discriminations of mud
As it shades from grey to silver or dries into soft pottery;
Discriminations of wind, sky, rough grasses and water-birds,
And, above all, to be well-dressed in tweeds and serviceable shoes
Although not like an inverted popinjay of the demented gentry
But as a schoolmaster of some reading and sensibility
Circa 1930 and up to his eccentric week-end pursuits, noticing,
Before the flood of specialists, the trace of lost peoples
In a partly eroded mound, marks in the earth, or this and that
Turned over with the aforementioned impermeable footwear.
Describing this to my strangely sophisticated companions
Is to observe them docket it for future reference in
A pigeon-hole of the mind labelled *Possible Satires*.
We are far gone in our own decay. I admit it freely,
Longing no more for even the wherewithal of decent sufficiency
Or whatever hypothetical brilliance makes it possible.
Whatever my friends long for, they no longer confess it
In the afternoon twilight of a long lunch in London
After that moment when the last carafe has been ordered.
Such delicate conversations of years gone by! You would think
Perceptions of this sort best left for approaching senility,
Especially as, in my case, I was not born ever to expect
To enjoy so long-drawn-out a lunchtime at steep prices
Among tolerant waiters resigned to our lasting presences
As if they could sense a recapitulation by young men of young men
In that fine hour of Edwardian promise at the *Tour Eiffel*
Or expatriate Americans and Irishmen in 'twenties Paris.
It is pretty well standard among literary phenomena.
Whether in the Rome of Martial Martialis or London ordinaries
Favoured by roaring playwrights and poets destined for
Future righteousness or a destructive addiction to sack,
Lunch, lunch is a unitary principle, as Balzac would tell you
And as any man of letters consulting his watch towards noon
Would undoubtedly endorse. Lunch is the business of capitals,
Whether in *L'Escargot Bienvenue*, *Gobbles*, or the cheap Italian joint.
Impoverished or priggish in the provinces, where talent is born,

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The angry poets look towards London as to a sea of restaurants,
Cursing the overpriced establishments of where they live
And the small scatter of the like-minded not on speaking terms.
But even this pleasure has waned, and its sum of parts—
People shaking hands on the pavement, a couple entering
A taxi bright in the London rain, the red tears on a bottle
And the absorbing conspiracies and asserted judgments
Of young men in the self-confident flush of their promise—
Its sum of parts no longer presents a street of epiphanies.
Too much now has been spoken, or published, or unpublished.
Manias without charm, cynicism without wit, and integrity
Lying around so long it has begun to stink, can be seen and heard,
And to come south from the country in a freshly pressed suit
Is no longer the exercise in youthful if gauche dignity
It once was in days of innocent enthusiasm without routine.
And so I look forward to my tweed-clad solitude, alone
Beside the widening estuary, the lighthoused island appearing
Where waves of the sea turmoil against the river's waters
Baring their salty teeth and roaring. And here I can stand
In a pretence of being a John Buchan of the underdog—
Forgive me my fantasies as, Lord, I surely forgive you yours—
With my waistcoated breast puffed against the wind. What do they long for?
Propping up bars with them, I can pretend to be as they are
Though I no longer know what they are thinking, if ever I did,
And, raising this civil if not entirely sympathetic interest
In what they feel, I know it contributes little to them,
Adding, as it does, to a change in myself they might not notice,
Causing me this pain as I realise the way I must change
Is to be different from friends I love and whose company—
When the last carafe was ordered, an outrageous remark spoken,
Or someone announced his plan for an innovating stanza
Or a new development in his crowded sex-life—whose company
Was a landmark in my paltry accumulation of knowledge.
Perhaps, after all, this not altogether satisfactory
Independence of mind and identity before larger notions
Is a better mess to be in, with a pocketful of bread and cheese,
My hip-flask, and the *Poésie* of Philippe Jaccottet,
Listening to the sea compose its rhythms of urbanity,
Although it is a cause for fear to notice that only my footprints
Litter this deserted beach with signs of human approach,
Each squelch of leather on mud complaining, "*But where are you going?*"

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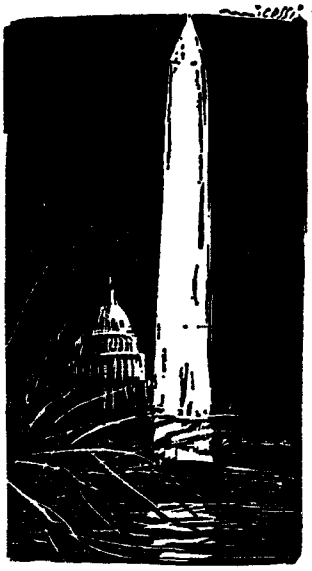
AMERICAN CHRONICLE

The Special Interest State

By John W. Gardner



OUR GOVERNments Federal, state and local, have always been influenced by powerful private interests. But until the latter half of the 19th century, those interests were few in number chiefly businessmen and big landowners; then agriculture and labour slowly achieved political influence, with eventually very great impact.

The spectacular changes came during and after World War II, with an almost astronomical expansion in the number and variety of special interest groups. With every decade that passed more and more such groups organised themselves into highly effective political forces. If one were to ask Americans to name the special interest groups that seek to influence government, they would probably say, "Well, there's Business—and then there's Labor." They might also mention "farmers", but they would have no inkling of the enormous proliferation of organised groups. First of all "Business" isn't a single group; it involves thousands of representatives of differing business interests, interests which are often at odds with one another. There are various powerful labour groups (and they also often disagree among themselves); the maritime interests; religious and racial groups. Just about every occupational or professional group in the USA is organised; institutional groups such as hospitals and junior colleges have their national organisations; and practically all such groups have learned the arts of tough professional lobbying.

The ever-increasing specialisation in American society has been, no doubt, the chief factor in this extraordinary proliferation of groups. But equally relevant is the growing scarcity of resources relative to expectations, for each group feels that it must fight for its share. In short, the number and variety of organised special interest groups is wholly unprecedented, numbering in the thousands. And there are also the numerous citizen groups pursuing what they conceive to be "the public interest."

The special interest groups in themselves are not sinister: they are all of us. It is entirely in accord with our pluralistic philosophy that all these groups should vigorously pursue their own objectives, and they have a Constitutional right to lobby for those objectives.

SO WHAT's the problem?

First, there is the cluster of difficulties that arises when special interest pressures distort or corrupt the political process or diminish the accountability of government—when money is used to bribe public officials or when secrecy is used to conceal from the voters things they should know about their government and their officials.

Beyond such patent improprieties, difficulties stem from the very nature of the Special Interest State. At times, for example, the various interests bringing pressure on the political process are so numerous and tenacious as to paralyse the society's problem-solving capacity. To comprehend this paralysis as the policymaker experiences it, imagine a checker-player confronted by a bystander who puts a thumb on one checker and says "Go ahead and play, just don't touch this one", and then another bystander puts a thumb on another checker with the same warning, and then another and another. Pretty soon all thumbs and no moves. The irony is that the owners of the thumbs—the special interests—don't want to make the game unwinnable; they just don't want you to touch their particular checker. And the result is that they paralyse the policy-making process.

The consequences are particularly apparent in such complex problems as energy, inflation, tax-reform, transportation, and the urban crisis. How many times have we seen a major American city suffering grave municipal problems while every

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possible solution is blocked by one or another powerful union, commercial interest, professional group, or political element? Each has achieved veto power over a piece of any possible solution; and no one has the power to solve the problem. Thus, in an oddly self-destructive conflict, the parts wage war against the whole.

The war of the parts against the whole is not a minor political dilemma, but the central problem of pluralism today. We are moving rapidly toward a society so intricately organised that the working of the whole system may be halted if one part stops functioning: our capacity to frustrate one another through non-cooperation has increased dramatically. The part can hold the whole system up for ransom (as the air traffic controllers on both sides of the Atlantic have discovered).

The paid spokesmen for special constituencies are almost invariably more rigid and uncompromising than their clients. The clients, not under the obligation to represent anything but their own opinion, may compromise on many points, and may quickly see the other fellow's point of view. The paid spokesman fights for the last drop of blood: it's his job.

THE PENETRATION of special interests into the structure of the US government has gone far beyond what the American public would guess. According to current mythology there exists an entity called "The Federal Government" which is always at odds with a wholly separate entity called "The Private Sector." In fact, a large part of what is called the Federal Government is not a coherent entity at all, but a collection of fragments which have strong ties to highly-organised special interests in the private sector. When an interest group complains about the "meddlesomeness" of government it is not generally complaining about that piece of government over which it exercises influence. It is complaining about those pieces of government over which it has *not* managed to establish influence (i.e. those pieces under the influence of some other interest group). That is why citizens who work to open up government to public scrutiny find themselves fighting a lonely battle. The innumerable organised interest groups do not welcome the idea that the public should know the extent to which they have created special interest baronies inside government.

Another piece of current mythology is that Congress and the Executive Branch are two great independent branches in a permanent adversary relationship to one another. That is often true at the Washington top, even when the President and Congressional leadership are of the same party. But below the top a high proportion of Members of Congress have well-cultivated alliances with various middle-level bureaucrats—and with the outside lobbies that seek to influence those bureaucrats. Many hundreds of these tightly knit, hidden alliances exist, and every President soon discovers that they are largely beyond his control. The citizen, of course, finds it exceedingly puzzling that the President can't control his own bureaucracy. The fact is that the President can win any specific fight if the bureaucracy is his sole foe—but he can't win out over many hundreds of alliances in which the bureaucrats supposedly under his command have hidden links with Congress and outside lobbies.

In short, instead of the US being run by a well-knit "behind-the-scenes" power group (as the conspiracy theorists would have it), it is whip-sawed by a great multiplicity of special interests, each determined to exercise maximum control over a *piece* of the public process. The most powerful groups own large chunks of the Executive Branch and have virtually decisive influence on large numbers of Congressmen; hundreds of other groups, while less commanding, nevertheless have well-established beachheads in both Congress and the executive agencies.

IT IS IMPORTANT to understand the "natural history" of such alliances. Government action can profoundly affect the well-being of various groups. It can raise or lower subsidies for farmers, strengthen or weaken the laws affecting trade unions, tax a particular industry more heavily or give it a special tax break. Naturally, those groups organise to ensure an outcome that is favourable to them. If, by chance, Congress were to pass a programme of modest grants for people named Smith, there would emerge within one year at most a National Smith Association with headquarters in Washington. Within two years it would be a smoothly functioning lobby—fighting for cost-of-living increases in the grants, and fending off proposed grants for people named "Brown" and "Jones." By the third year the lobby would have succeeded in forcing creation of a separate Smith Development Agency to handle the grant programme. The programme would have powerful friends in Congress and the bureaucracy; and the grants would grow.

Thus, the power of government to grant or withhold favours leads outside groups to organise, and organised groups to lobby by establishing powerful ties inside the bureaucracy and in Congress. The bureaucrats and the Members of Congress then function in a comfortable alliance to keep the programme going and growing.

I AM often asked: "Why not just stop worrying and let the interest groups compete? Isn't that the pluralistic ideal?" Twenty years ago, before the groups had become so numerous and so aggressive, political observers might have answered "Yes":

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but we've all been forced to do some re-thinking. Today we'd be more likely to say "Let them compete? Yes.... Stop worrying? No."

We are all now familiar with the phenomenon that Garrett Hardin called "the Tragedy of the Commons." If individuals have free and unconstrained access to some limited common resources (grazing grounds, fishing areas, etc.), and if the destruction of that common resource (e.g. from overgrazing) does not get recorded as a cost for the individual user, the latter will tend to push the exploitation of the common resource too far. Collectively, the users will tend to destroy the resource, though no single one of them intended to do so. The lesson is that every element of the society must look beyond its own special interest to the common good; it is a political lesson, not a moralistic one. Another reason we can't just "let pluralism rip" is the thumbs-on-the-checkerboard phenomenon described earlier, with its consequent paralysis of the public process.

Finally, it must be pointed out that we are dealing today with a pluralism that less and less sees the free market as its natural habitat and increasingly places its main bets on manipulation of the political and governmental process. This will move inexorably toward the politicisation of everything. As the trend continues, a business firm's success will depend to an ever greater degree on the smoothness and power of its intervention in government. Related to second place will be such matters as whether it produces superior goods, whether it enjoys high productivity, whether it operates at low unit cost. Similarly, the success of a university will depend upon its capacity to manipulate the political and governmental machinery. It won't really matter whether the university is adhering to standards of excellence, providing superior education or nurturing good scholars and scientists. It is depressing to think about the long-term future for such a state.

EVERY thoughtful representative of a special interest knows that there will inevitably be times when interests of his constituents may not coincide with the best interests of his country. There will be times when, if his constituents win, the nation may lose; and that makes no sense, because if the nation fails, surely we all fail.

So what should he do? He might begin by recognising that he alone cannot be the arbiter of what is in the nation's interest; nor can the representative of any other special interest. The reconciling of multiple interests toward the common good is one of the tasks of a just government, and the American founding fathers went to some lengths to see that we had such a government. The "tragedy of the commons", whenever it occurs, is inexcusable.

So the problem of all members of special interest groups will be at least *partly* solved if government is functioning fairly, honestly and responsively. Every special interest must make a new special effort to encourage the effective and equitable functioning of those political and governmental processes that seek to reconcile conflicting interests and build the national future. All too rarely have any of the special interests shown the slightest concern for the health of the public process; all too often they have been satisfied with incompetent, disorganised or corrupt government, provided they could influence it under the table. But a weak and corruptible government will sell out to a rival special interest just as cheerfully, and may also surrender to a demagogue if one arises.

One crucial step in removing corruption from government has been the reform of campaign financing. Ironically, Congress has already proved the effectiveness of campaign financing reforms through the enactment of far-reaching reforms in the financing of Presidential campaigns. The 1976 Presidential campaign was the cleanest in recent memory, coming just four years after one of the rottenest; and those reforms ensured that a new President would enter office without a staggering burden of obligations to money-laden interests.

But Congress, having voted to clean up Presidential campaigns, refused to apply the same remedy to itself! The consequence is that when the President seeks solutions to national problems through Congressional action, he finds that Congress is beholden to multiple masters—namely, the campaign donors. Even when Congress is controlled by the same party that holds the Presidency, it cannot acknowledge his leadership; first and last it must dance to the donors' tune. There is hardly any measure more crucial to a President's capacity to govern than the public financing of Congressional campaigns.

There are other measures that are being taken to ensure the honesty and accountability of government. For example, conflict-of-interest rules, including personal financial disclosure, are diminishing the likelihood that officials will be influenced by their personal financial interests.

Another set of remedial measures focuses on "open government", for openness ranks next to the rule of law as a fundamental ingredient of self-government. Citizens can't function as intelligent supporters or critics of government unless they can know what government is doing; power exercised in secret breeds corruption. Disclosure is a central feature of campaign finance reform, and "Lobbying disclosure" is enabling citizens to know what special interest is spending how much to influence its public officials. Open meetings of legislative bodies, regulatory commissions and advisory groups enable the public to see how the public business is conducted, and recent "Freedom of

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Information" statutes make new information readily available.

WITH THE GAME being played out in the open, less at the mercy of hidden influences, and a Congress that has not been bought and paid for, our system has a chance of working. But we must face the fact that even in a wholly open system of government, even if all the hidden games are forced to the surface, the thousands of special interest groups will still be putting their thumbs on the checkerboard, still inducing paralysis in the public process. Given the fact, it is becoming more important than ever for the President to exercise vigorous leadership. Watergate taught citizens to be alert to Presidential abuse of power and to preserve the countervailing forces of Congress, the courts, and a free press. Now we face the fact that citizens must help a President put the Federal machinery in shape to the point where governing is possible.

The President must gain a reasonable degree of command of the numberless programmes over which he presides. Since the fiscal lever is far and away the most potent instrument of control over programmes, indeed the most effective integrating instrument, he has not only to give close attention to his own budget, but to do everything in his power to help those who are trying to make the new Congressional budgetary process work. If he is wise he will embrace some version of the "Sunset" proposal, which requires that Federal programmes should be periodically and automatically reviewed with the purpose of deciding whether they should be terminated, modified, or continued. It is a proposal that involves some hazards and must be applied with prudence, but it has great virtues: for under present practice, old programmes never die; they don't even fade away. Under the Sunset mechanism, a programme would be kept in existence only if, after careful evaluation, the Congress considered it so valuable as to deserve enactment *de novo*.

At the same time, the President needs a reorganisation of the Executive Branch, and this would be most effective if there were a simultaneous reorganisation of Congressional Committee jurisdictions; but this, I fear, will be very hard to accomplish. His greatest difficulty is that present patterns of organisation are held in place by powerful special interests. They have spent a long time digging their tunnels into the public treasury, and they don't want anyone blasting in the vicinity.

A last word about management and personnel. Obviously "Government" is mainly people, and how they function depends on how the agencies in which they serve are managed. If personnel and management practices are not improved, the thought of getting a grip on the bloated bureaucracy is an idle dream. Parenthetically, no one suffers more from the present evils than people in the career services. The good ones (and they are numerous) will be eager allies of any effort to make the American system work better. A President must reach out to them, and the current proposals for Civil Service reform are an essential first step.

Politics of Envy

In the Jackdaw folder of "Historical Genitalia",
The suitors of Elizabeth and reasons for their failure,
The Bonsai quality of Buonaparte's regalia,
What Hitler was missing in the region of Westphalia
Would all be investigated *inter* many *alia*.

Elizabeth I in a miniature by Hilliard
Scanned for masculinity by Hotson, Rowse and Tillyard,
The gusset of Napoleon expounded like "The Iliad",
Hitler in his bunker playing pocket billiard
Would all be reproduced by the chiliad or milliard.

But if the young princess's *pudenda* were like Alice's
And only redetermined by Elizabethan malices,
If Buonaparte's was small because he owned huge palaces
And Hitler lost a ball when he gave the globe paralysis,
Do malicious jealousies provide all phallic fallacies?

Duncan Forbes

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A Dog Engulfed by Sand (II)

Abstraction & Irony—By MALCOLM BRADBURY

IN MY FIRST ARTICLE (ENCOUNTER, November) I reflected on that great change in painting and writing that evolved at the end of the 19th century—when realist lore began to disintegrate, positivism struggled with intuitionalism, sociology with psychology, naturalism with aestheticism, and out of this volatile compound the modern arts of abstraction began to emerge. It was a transformation crucial in the history of art—and one to which great attention has been given, as we have come, more and more, to recognise that we still live in an art-field greatly affected by the consequences of that shift into modernism. The modernist episode has had many explanations. But what most emphasise is the force and totality of the change: "An abrupt break with all tradition", Herbert Read called it in *Art Now* (1933), adding that "The aim of five centuries of European effort is openly abandoned." To that view there has been much consent. There is, however, far less consent about the character of the change, or the reasons for it.[1]

One of the most interesting explanations is that offered by the Spanish philosopher, Ortega y Gasset, in his essay "The Dehumanisation of Art."[2] Ortega's "dehumanisation" is a complicated concept, partly based on the proposition that the impulses behind the new art are "not of a generically human kind", the reason being that it is a new élitist art, deliberately separating itself from a populace which is unable to distinguish aesthetic pleasure from ordinary behaviour:

> . . . not many people are capable of adjusting their perceptive apparatus to the pane and the transparency that is the work of art. Instead they look right through it and revel in the human reality with which the work deals.

Ortega's "dehumanisation" actually greatly resembles Victor Shklovsky's now fashionable concept of "defamiliarisation", or "making strange" ("The technique of art is to make things 'unfamiliar', to make forms obscure, so as to increase the difficulty and the duration of perception").[3] But where Shklovsky, in the formalist fashion, is primarily concerned with *structures* of defamiliarisation, Ortega is particularly interested in the changed representation of the human figure: the centre of familiarity. He especially stresses the progressive dislodging of the human contents of art, in modern works, in the interests of form and play. "For the modern artist", he says, "aesthetic pleasure derives from . . . triumph over human matter. That is why he has to drive home his victory by presenting in each case the strangled victim"—that "strangled victim" being the vestigial remnant of the human, the surviving element of the humanistic, that he also finds persistently in modern art and writing. The result is an "inversion" of the older mode of art:

> Before, reality was overlaid with metaphors by way of ornament; now the tendency is to eliminate the extrapoetical, or real, prop and to "realize" the metaphor, to make it the *res poetica*.

But, unlike many modern critics, such as Herbert Read, Ortega is *not* struck by the novelty of it all: the totality of the break with the past. Dehumanisation, though it now takes new forms, is not historically new; it is rather a fresh version of the long-established iconoclastic tradition. "All great periods of art have been careful not to let the work of art revolve around human contents", he notes. Indeed it is the 19th century, and realism—which

[1] For an extensive discussion of this, see the "Introduction: The Name and Nature of Modernism" in Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (eds.), *Modernism* (Pelican Guides to European Literature series, 1976).

[2] Jose Ortega y Gasset, "The Dehumanization of Art", first published in English in 1948, reprinted in *The Dehumanisation of Art and Other Writings on Art and Culture* (1972). This also contains "Notes on the Novel", referred to here.

[3] Victor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" (1917), reprinted in L. T. Lemon and M. J. Reis (eds.), *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays* (1965).

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we often think of as the mainstream—that he sees as the divergence, "a maximum aberration in the history of taste." For it was then, he says, that art was humanised, laid open to our identification, our projection of sympathy, our feelings of direct involvement; though, he says, works of this kind are "only partially works of art, or artistic objects." Realism and humanism consorted; men, houses and mountains became, in art, "our good old friends."

This also helps explain why the novel and the mode of narrative, of story, flourished so strongly in the 19th century, and also why the novel is a very important element in the question. For, Ortega suggests (in another article, "Notes on the Novel"), the novel has an inbuilt propensity toward this humanising principle, a devotion toward "imaginary psychology" which can become all too real, and realistic. Ortega's view on this matter is not, of course, new; the novel has long been seen, especially by its writers, as a form attentive to commonplace reality, to close and exploratory relations among characters, intensity of experience *within* characters, to the slow, contingent, narrative evolution of the motion of a human life through society and history—a life we identify with, Ortega says, because "imaginary personages appear like living persons." But Ortega also rightly notes that the new arts of abstraction thus have a special effect with regard to the novel. Because novels tend toward being "a fiction of human realities", dehumanisation in them tends to acquire a character as irony—an irony present in other modes, like painting, and especially portraiture, but of special weight in fiction.

ARGUMENTS LIKE Ortega's and Shklovsky's have been very important in our understanding of modern forms, and indeed of the forms of art in general. But, as I suggested in my last article, it would not do to suppose that this "dehumanisation" of art has been all of one kind: the kind that is devoted to intensifying the artistic element in art. For many writers, like Gertrude Stein and Virginia Woolf, this was the case; the opportunity was now for art to become more itself, and at the same time to effect a deeper penetration of human character, to create an art of consciousness and the unconscious, so that the aesthetic endeavour merged with the enterprising endeavours of the mind or the *id*.

But there were other writers for whom new theories of abstract or hard form had a rather different meaning; they were responses to the structure of contemporary history, itself a process of dehumanisation. "As far as one can see, the new 'tendency toward abstraction' will culminate, not so

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much in the simple geometrical forms found in archaic art, but in more complicated ones associated in our minds with the idea of machinery", claimed T. E. Hulme, under the influence of Bergson and Worringer; it is of great importance that he delivered these comments in a lecture on "Modern Art" in 1914, in the season of Vorticism and *Blast,* which already prefigured the world of the European battle-fronts where individuals found themselves swamped and annihilated by mechanical warfare and mass killing. The newer abstraction of Futurism, Vorticism and Expressionism also undoubtedly shaped D. H. Lawrence's transforming theory of character, which he elaborated in the famous letter to Edward Garnett in 1915, about *Women in Love*:

> "It is the inhuman will, call it physiology, or like Marinetti—physiology of matter, that fascinates me. I don't so much care about what the woman *is*. . . . You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable *ego*—of the character. . . ."

LIKE FORMS CAN HAVE different rationales. Abstraction might be founded on the need for formal innovation or an aesthetic deliverance. But it could also be a style of response, a way of evolving an aesthetic analogue to the historical processes of technologisation, mechanisation and collectivisation which were displacing human beings from the centre of the landscape, making animate and inanimate elements equal, changing the compositional proportion of man and thing.

Certainly by the 1920s, after the calamitous war which destroyed much of the content of traditional culture, disoriented morality, displaced social usages, questioned all rhetoric and challenged the confident faith that the individual could transact profitably with society or history, the exterior causalities enforcing abstraction and irony in the arts became that much more apparent.

The dread of nothingness, the sense of the landscape as assailant, the conviction that the world is dominated by the mechanistic destruction of life, the domination of the naturalist void: these elements of modern awareness, which Frederick J. Hoffman very profitably explores in his book *The Mortal No: Death and the Modern Imagination,* invited, in the postwar world of the 1920s, a new concept of form.[4] The damaged or wounded human figure, on the battlefield or in the historical or social landscape—like Tietjens, Jake Barnes, Clifford Chatterley—required attention. So did the mechanical individual caught in the dance of meaningless society: Waugh's Bergsonian dancers, Kafka's heroes, caught in a totalitarian state apparatus, Musil's man without qualities, trapped in the characterless void. Dehumanisation, that is, became not just a potential in art but a factor of history. It was in the modernising motion of the world, the secularisation of life, the mastery of brute process, that there was a loss of self—an alienation, an existential exposure, a necessary awareness of the absurdity of the human figure.

Thus, in fiction, we can see the growth of two kinds of abstraction: and Virginia Woolf's aestheticised portraits of consciousness versus Waugh's mechanised comic performers might represent the options. The irony of abstraction was increasingly assimilated *inside* the work; what it manifested was not new content, but loss of content. And even when modernism itself had passed its peak, and the arts of pure formal abstraction began, in the novel of the 1930s through to the 1950s, to give way to a realist revival, this concern with dehumanisation and the irony surrounding the human figure none the less continued.[5]

TODAY, OF COURSE, we no longer live in the era of modernist style; modernism has become historical. But we do, it seems, live in an era of revived experimentalism, and in the novel the period of a revived and negotiable realism seems to be under a severe questioning. Indeed it is possible to argue that we are in a new and distinct aesthetic season, and a flag of convenience has been given us to sail under, called "Post-Modernism."

Under this broad banner have been clustered such varied phenomena as the theatre of the absurd, the French *nouveau roman,* the American new journalism, aleatory art and music, and various tendencies in painting ranging from pop art and op art to abstract expressionism and photo-realism. Moreover, as so often happens in experimental seasons, painting and the novel have come closer together again. There is a new cult of synaesthesia; and the happening, the multi-media event, the intermediate or parodic art form all seem to be central expressions of the tendency. And we can find them influencing the course of the novel, which has tended to leave the realist path and examine its own

[4] Frederick J. Hoffman, *The Mortal No: Death and the Modern Imagination* (1964). This remarkable study of the new style of "landscape as assailant" and "man as victim" notes the importance of "the modern manoeuvring of force" as a factor in modern style. Modern war is thus an essential factor. He notes:

> "One important description of violence is that it serves to threaten the balance of forms. Since forms are the result of the mental and imaginative functions, violence frequently comes from a distortion of one or the other, which throws the formal economy into imbalance. . . . One may explain modern culture by saying that the relationship between the two functions responsible for forms has broken down, that as a result of this failure of balance it has become extremely difficult to comprehend life and death formally. The forms no longer contain the force; the force is unleashed; it is perhaps at the disposal of the intellect, but not reliably of the imagination."

[5] For a fuller analysis of the intellectual and stylistic milieux behind these developments, see Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, *Modernism.*

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lexical and structural nature. But if there are signs of a return to formalism, it is a formalism negotiated on new terms, and hostile to the formalism of the moderns, where the world was chaotic but art at least was whole. Indeed one might suggest that one essential common ground for contemporary art is that the very idea of art as solid, self-subsistent and hermetic has become ironised. And yet at the same time the new art is determinedly abstract, or in some fashion post-realist. The spectacle is most apparent in painting, but increasingly it has found its equivalents in the other media, including the verbal ones: drama, poetry, and fiction.

It has been said, by A. Alvarez, that we live today in an era of No Style—an era, that is, when there is such stylistic profusion that it is not possible to identify a significant centre. Certainly, in art since 1945, the period has been one of both extraordinary creativity and stylistic prolixity. Isms and movements have, as Edward Lucie-Smith says in his useful survey of the subject,[6] succeeded each other in an ever more rapid tempo, so that in consequence historical provisionality has become a marked feature of contemporary artistic production. There is a high rate of stylistic consumption; of style about style, of fashion as form, of form as fashion. This has happened in a late modern world where the very roles of fashion and style have themselves been culturally changing, and where there has been a significant new symbiosis between an avant-garde tradition evolved from modernism and surrealism and the mood of popular and of counter culture. Today, evidently, we live in a stylistic melting pot, a world of transforming social, sexual and epistemological relationships, a world in which new stylistic negotiations have a significant social function. There are bohemians on every street corner, self-parodists in every boutique, neo-artists at every discothèque.

The new narcissism of contemporary western culture has been much analysed lately[7]; part of that narcissism is that stylistic negotiation has a social function, become a way of intersecting with contemporary history and the conditions of the late technological world. The foregrounding of style has led, in discussion of art and writing, to much talk of meta-art, para-criticism, sur-fiction. But at the same time the emphasis on style has tended to acquire a certain character as irony. It is hard to distil any dominant characteristics from an artistic scene that has taken in abstract expressionism, pop, op and kinetic art, photo realism, minimalist and conceptual art, multi-media events and happenings,

[6] Edward Lucie-Smith, *Movements in Art Since 1945* (rev. ed., 1975).

[7] See, especially, Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York, 1978), and also related articles by Lasch in *The New York Review of Books*.

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and which has taken its funds from an enormous variety of cultural milieux. But if there is a dominant feature, it is surely an element of inbuilt provisionality: an instinct, indeed, toward parody and self-parody.

ON THIS MATTER, it seemed that for a time the world of painting and that of writing were diverging. The postwar scene in fiction saw a marked revival of realism—the "angry" writers in England, the neo-existential novelists in France, the moralistic writers of Jewish-American fiction in America—in the 1950s. But increasingly, it seems, painting and writing have come closer together; painters and writers have alike been trying to redefine the act of creation by moving away both from a directly referential and realistic mode, *and* from the hermetic modes of modernism. There has been a revival of *stylised* realism: in photo-realist painting, or the work of artists like Hockney and Caulfield; in the documentary or the non-fiction novel. There has been also a revival of modernist abstraction, but with a new sense of extremity: the blankness of the minimalist painting, the textual silences of a Beckett. The traditional canvas has been penetrated, violated, reconstructed; the text has been reformed, mocked, sub-divided.

As painters have concentrated on the conditions of the medium and taken them beyond themselves, so writers have come to concentrate on the lexical surface of the text itself, presenting something which exists provisionally, dominated not by sympathetic characters, systems of value, or designed formal perspectives, like point-of-view, but by chance rhythms arising from the juxtaposition of old structures, the free-running opportunities of composition, or the parodic mockery of structure and form. Thus the work of art becomes a game-like construct, with which innumerable permutations may be played; and traditional formal alliances, those between painter, canvas and viewer, or between writer, character, plot, text and reader, become a manipulable subject of the work.

ART THUS BECOMES an instrument through which the contingency and chance of experience may be playfully ordered or not, as the case may be, given or not given significance, defined or not defined as reality. And as for reality, our good old friend, there is a tendency to incorporate it on a basis of distrust. The foregrounding of text in fiction makes it a visual object: the writer takes the painterly stance, treating his text as phenomenon, his episodes as scenic sequences, his characters as posed figures. Meanwhile the author is posed himself, a performer, an intruder, a maker of perceptions he is all too ready to disown.

Space is hard; the text does not yield to sympathy or anthropomorphic identifications; things are seen as inert and unconnected with men, who may themselves become caricatures or manipulable fictional objects. Systems and codes abound, but acquire the character of exterior forms, borrowed from the literary stock or else from the dark plottings and orders of contemporary history. The narrator eludes us, becomes a less than controlling voice, speculating either about his right to possess a system, or insisting on its fictionality; the writer searches his way, as Borges does, through the labyrinth of words he creates. Within the provisional forms lie the human remnants: characters are trapped in their plots, or revolt against the idea that they are someone else's fiction, entrapped in a linguistic or structural code intended to overwhelm them. All stories exist as old stories: the best we can offer is a version or an ironic variant. Stories end; text goes on.

Systematically what is discouraged is a direct humanistic contact with the work, the forging of the nexus of sympathy. The underlying theme may be that of assaulting contemporary dehumanisation, or simply manifesting it, generating, as in the "cybernetic" novel of Thomas Pynchon, William Burroughs and William Gaddis, a detached fictional technology in parallel with the world. Much of this work is, in fact, ambiguous: the paintings of Lichtenstein, the films of Warhol, the novels of Burroughs fall somewhere between a celebration and a critique of an anti-human world. But what is evident is that a cybernetic universe, a universe of assimilated technology, and also an attached portrait of man as himself a parody, an automator, a role-player, a formless performer, a cardboard cutout, has entered deeply into the textures of modern, self-ironic art.[8]

THIS MAY SEEM a long path to take to reach my title, which is that of a painting by Goya; the title is probably not his own, for this is one of the Black Paintings, done from private need on the walls of his country house sometime between 1814 and 1819, and subsequently removed on to canvas and into the Prado.

Goya, painting on the romantic turn, was an artist in tension—the painter of polite portraits and of sensuous nudes, the savage cartoonist and the flat reporter of war and political events, the court painter and the romantic radical. The motto of his earlier series the Caprichos ("The sleep of reason begets monsters") shows his romantic ambiguity. And that motto, in fact, exactly fits the Black Paintings—done in his darkest period, over a time of political disenchantment and withdrawal, of deafness and serious illness, of despair and growing nihilism. Anguish and horror are unmistakable in

[8] For a fuller account of the stylistic characteristics of "post-modernist" and contemporary fiction, see my introduction to Malcolm Bradbury (ed.), *The Novel Today* (1977).

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them; they are grotesque, surrealistic works, studies in pain, portraits of suffering and cruelty, images of hurt drawn from the inner, darker depths of the imagination and the external facts of a dark, war-torn, violent world. The colour-range is narrow and sombre, the faces in the figure-paintings contorted, the subjects horrifying: Saturn devouring his children, a battlefield seen as a Witches' sabbath.

The paintings make a sequence. But "A Dog Engulfed by Sand" somewhat differs from the others, mainly because of its element of abstraction: on first sight one is not sure whether it is a figure-painting at all. There are two large blocks of colour, distinct but intersecting: a fainter impression of a third panel rises up on the right. In the line where the two main panels meet, low down, there is a flurried blob of grey paint; and even when we recognise the painting as representational, a composition of sky and sand, we have difficulty in identifying it. In fact, though, it is one of Goya's anguished heads, jutting up, so to speak, from the fold of the composition: the head of a dog, with white staring eyes.

This bodiless head is hard to place: is it a perspective, the dog seen over a fold of sand that hides the body? Or is it—as the title we have for the painting proposes—a dog literally drowning in soft sand, the head left for a moment before it too is sucked down and disappears? Whichever it is, the recognition changes the painting. It is no longer a work of cool, modern abstraction, as it could seem, but a work of fantastic realism. The abstraction is placed as the field which surrounds, threatens and engulfs the dog. A living figure in a painting—much like a character in a novel—encourages the reader into entrance, invites empathy and identification; that identification turns the painting into a picture of life engulfed by landscape, desert, void. The moving of the painting from Goya's house resulted in restoration, and this may have increased its abstract qualities; none the less the composition, based on large blocks of colour, and the minimalising of the figure, is evidently conceived in tragic irony. The figure of the dog disturbs the abstract composition; but the abstract composition dominates the central figure—and with, I think, an ambiguous, perplexed sense of the way art dominates, finally, its subject. The figure, in short, seems sacrificed to life, but also to form itself.

ABSTRACTION IS, OF COURSE, a modern word; we owe it, presumably, to Worringer, who published *Abstraction and Empathy* in 1907 (just as Stein was sitting for Picasso, as cubism was emerging). It can only loosely apply to Goya, who saw himself on the romantic turn, moving away from an art of imitation to one of imagination and fantasy. Yet one cannot help seeing this painting standing somehow behind two modern Spaniards: Picasso, of course, and Ortega y Gasset, with his reflections on the dehumanisation of art.

Certainly the painting seems to illuminate both Picasso's practice and Ortega's philosophical preoccupation. It does so because it contains both the instinct toward dehumanisation, that fascination of triumph over the strangled victim of which Ortega speaks, *and* the instincts of horror, tragedy and compassion that lead another way, out of purified form, into an art of artistic humanism and realism. It seems, that is, at once to assert and deny the idea of pure form. It represents, but strongly qualifies, in its very brush-strokes, the figure, and in doing so opens two divergent possibilities which still exist in art.

The painting has long fascinated me; and the fascination is in the tension it captures, a tension that, despite our contemporary acquaintance with modernism, we are still inclined to feel; in painting, but above all in the form in which realism and abstraction must contend by virtual necessity—the form, that is, of the novel. Indeed it was because of all this that I chose the painting for the cover of my novel *The History Man*, a book for the writing of which these tensions, stylistically and thematically, were central.

Why were they? Today, I think, the artist and the writer must come to terms with an art of dehumanisation, not just because the lore has been laid down, but for reasons just like those that make the problems central to our own lives in contemporary society. For we have committed ourselves, or become committed, to an abstractified, a process-centred, a depersonalising world, a world which shrinks the human figure, and is less and less susceptible to individualisation and individualism. We make such a world in practice and in thought. The risk is that we make it without needing to, through gestures of style. But styles are not, in the end, theoretical abstractions or purely aesthetic acts: they are acts of negotiation with, grammars for apprehending, the nature of current experience—which is why styles must, historically, change. We can hardly expect our artists to build societies of texture and depth if our architects, our town-planners, our sociologists and our politicians do not or cannot; the most we can expect is that they fantasise about such things for us in alternative fictional worlds. Meantime they must also find styles and grammars of address to a world like ours; that is the business of serious style. It is, I think, necessarily a grammar of harsh subject-object relations—a present-tense grammar, for we have lost touch with the historical continuum, and history is the process of the here and now, the place from which we draw self by watching the clock of the days, the signals of the season, the motions of fashion, the style of style.

And behind us is a hard landscape, the landscape we have made for ourselves to live in; it is, in my

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novel, that world of multi-storey carparks, shopping precincts, rundown ghettos, and concrete milieux for thought, called schools and universities, in which we offer such version of community as we have. In this topography we must find the human figure; and in thought—the thought certainly of my central character, who is more serious and competent than to some reviewers he has seemed—we have come to find him as little more than an actor on the shifting social stage, a role-player, an instantaneous performer without intense depth or substance. Such a topography, such a figure, such a style has become the affair of many of our best paintings, films, and novels: the paintings of Hockney, the films of Antonioni, the novels of Handke, for example.

It is, I think, our instinct that we would like novels, paintings, films to do more for us: to offer us safe anchors in sympathetic characters, a world like a good old friend. It is a proper and a necessary desire, and much depends on its survival; but we must understand why artists now find it hard to yield to it. The force and power of Goya's painting, for me, is that it succeeds in incorporating "humanisation" without yielding to it: that is what I wished to do too. For Goya's inward struggle between humanistic realism and abstraction, his sense that there is, in the abstract, an emotion of tragedy and horror, is not something we should give up. There are writers who have, but the fundamental fascination of the novel—that now ancient form in which realism and narrative have long struggled and negotiated with abstraction and pure form —is that it sustains, potentially, this crucial tension. And that, indeed, seems to me the heart of its contemporary relevance and importance.

The Art of Black Propaganda

How Not to Write History—By MARTIN ESSLIN

IS HISTORY bunk? Surely not. Yet, all too often, when I happen to chance upon what purports to be an account of events I myself have experienced at close range, the impression I am left with is that history—that kind of history at least—is indeed bunk. For not only do such accounts frequently teem with minor, and hence perhaps venial, inaccuracies—they often get the whole thing wrong by misunderstanding the very nature of the events they are trying to describe. And as I am convinced that history, to gain its deeper insights, to perform its profound analysis and to achieve real understanding, must start with an ability to see "*wie es eigentlich gewesen*", what was actually taking place, then there must be something very wrong with the methods used in arriving at such complete travesties of past reality.

These thoughts are prompted by a book which purports to be a history of the British propaganda effort in the Second World War.[1] This is a fascinating subject and one which, hitherto, has not received adequate treatment. True, the direct contribution of propaganda to the success of military operations, although certainly present, is impossible to assess; and most attempts to deal with War-time propaganda are tempted to do precisely that. It is a truism (always recognised by the more intelligent practitioners of psychological warfare) that it can only be effective if the military situation is favourable. But what tends to be overlooked is that in the aftermath of a war the long-term effects on the psychology of the populations involved may be immense. For having experienced defeat—or victory—any nation is bound to evolve the myth which will finally embody that experience into permanent consciousness, the self-image on which its actual national identity of the future will depend. The endless films, television series, and novels about the Second World War which retain their popularity more than 30 years after VE-Day testify to this fact. And they *are* based on the image built up by War-time propaganda. Hence a study of how this propaganda was organised and managed, what it was like, is of considerable theoretical and practical importance. After all, Gaullism was shaped by War-time broadcasts, as, indeed, was the thinking of the German Social and Christian Democrats who are now governing West Germany.

THE BRITISH PROPAGANDA EFFORT was by far the most successful example of political warfare in history. And so the question how it was accomplished is certainly worthy of serious attention. How did the intricately balanced structure of complex, interacting components evolve? The brilliant concept of a division of labour between an official broadcasting service on the one hand, with a reputation for total accuracy and complete honesty, and a complementary, "black" broadcasting service, the existence of which was kept secret from the British public and which could indulge in the most ruthlessly unscrupulous methods of deception, on the other—not to speak

[1] *The Fourth Arm: Psychological Warfare 1938–45*. By CHARLES CRUICKSHANK. Davis Poynter, £6.50.

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of the equally brilliant organisation which produced printed material from forged ration cards to elaborate miniature newspapers and magazines for occupied Europe as well as Nazi Germany.

How does Dr Cruickshank approach his chosen task of dealing with these fascinating and intricate matters? He has the highest scholarly principles, and he prides himself on his impeccable methodology: ". . . I am not indebted for a single fact to anyone other than the authors of contemporary official letters, minutes, memoranda and records of meeting" (p. 7). Why did he not consult the still by no means rare survivors who actually did the work he is dealing with? After all, propaganda was largely a young man's field: many of the leading members of PWE were in their 30s at the outbreak of War. But Dr Cruickshank does not trust eyewitnesses.

> "At the beginning of my research I consulted survivors of the Political Warfare Executive staff, including some of the rash (or is the collective noun a 'caution'?) of ambassadors which spread from the devious paths of political warfare at Woburn Abbey and Bush House to splendid embassies around the world, in whose powerful corridors deviousness is shunned and only truth is spoken; but I found (as I had done when researching earlier books on the Second World War) that no one remembers accurately what happened thirty or more years ago. . . ."

Quite apart from the delightful snobbishness which is here implied—only the top people of the Political Warfare Executive seem to have been worthy of being approached—the main implication of this statement is that memoranda, minutes of meetings, and official letters are a less confusing, a much clearer source, a much better way of getting at the historical truth. What justification is there for such an assumption?

HAVING READ the book right through—and having lived through the events described in a very humble capacity (which did not lead me into any ambassadorial corridors)—I must admit that there seems to me to be no justification whatsoever to assume that official memoranda and minutes of meetings are a better way of establishing the historical truth.

There are a number of obvious reasons for this.

First of all, as Dr Cruickshank himself admits with admirable candour in his Preface,

> "The Political Warfare Executive papers are, perhaps, inevitably in a mess. . . . There was no formal registration of papers in the early days of the propaganda department and the researcher is now faced with a multiplicity of 'do-it-yourself'

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filing systems which have nothing in common, except the extreme difficulty of making head or tail of them."

Well, it must be said straight away that in many instances Dr Cruickshank did in fact fail to make out head or tail. The picture of the operation which emerges from his reading of them is extremely confused. And no wonder: a good deal of the actual communication between the participants in political warfare was conducted over the telephone, or in private encounters in the canteen. Only a relatively small part of what went on ever found its way into memoranda. And then the memoranda were using a private jargon, a kind of shorthand which the historian would have to be able to decode.

Thus, for example, Dr Cruickshank seems to think that Sefton Delmer, who was in charge of the so-called black stations broadcasting to Germany, himself acted as the sinister dissident Nazi Resistance leader who called himself "*Der Chef*" in the early part of the War. Yet anyone who knew anything about the operation could have told him that, as Delmer was also appearing as a speaker on the BBC's white broadcasts and his voice would therefore be well known in Germany, he could not possibly also have impersonated a sinister Nazi dissident. Moreover, Sefton Delmer has himself, in his memoirs[2], described how he groomed and trained a German socialist refugee, Paul Sanders, for the part. Dr Cruickshank lists Delmer's autobiography in his bibliography, but he does not seem to have read it. Or perhaps he did not believe Delmer's statement because it was not contained in an official memorandum. How, then, could those very memoranda mislead the assiduously scientific historian? Simply because in the jargon shorthand of PWE "*Der Chef's*" broadcasts tended to be referred to as "Delmer's broadcasts."

As a result, to the reader of memoranda, the events he describes appear through a kind of thick old-style London fog. He does not know what the words used refer to; he cannot, for example, keep up with changes in the terminology which, after all, had to be evolved from day to day as departments changed their designations or new personnel began to use a slightly different jargon. Thus Dr Cruickshank does not realise that a black broadcasting station which first, as it was confined to short waves, called itself *Atlantiksender* came to be called *Soldatensender Calais* when it began broadcasting on a powerful medium wavelength, and that it had to change its designation again, after Calais had been liberated, to the geographically more flexible *Soldatensender West*. The *same* station was also referred to by various code-names in the official memoranda. Dr Cruickshank is just hopelessly confused about it all.

[2] Sefton Delmer, *Black Boomerang* (Secker & Warburg, 1962).

But that is the least of the sources of error which reliance on memoranda and official minutes entails. The real problem lies much deeper. It arises from two questions: (*1*) to what extent are official memoranda candid, truthful and thus an indication of what actually was the case? And (*2*) to what extent do official memoranda circulating at the highest level of a bureaucracy actually reflect the real state of affairs at the "operational level", which, after all, is where the action is?

What the files Dr Cruickshank ploughed through mainly reflect (and it occupies a very large part of his book) is the initial struggle for control of the "fourth arm"—the propaganda apparatus—between the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Economic Warfare, and the Ministry of Information. This was essentially a power struggle between a series of strong personalities (Lord Reith, Duff Cooper, Hugh Dalton, Anthony Eden), and it was real enough. The memoranda which passed to and fro, the committees that were set up, the meetings that were held and more or less accurately or partisanly minuted were weapons in that struggle. The arguments used in them, advocating one course or another, were thus severely biased and slanted in favour of the ministry or even the official concerned. To deduce, as Dr Cruickshank repeatedly tries to, the truth about the effect of a certain measure or line of policy (or even the actual shape of the operations which are referred to in these documents) is well-nigh impossible.

BUT EVEN IF one assumed that a true picture of the power struggle and its real background could be reconstructed from the written records still extant (and one always has to remember that very often the substance of the events was not recorded because it was the outcome of verbal transactions), how relevant would it be for an understanding of the actual conduct of the propaganda war?

Clearly it *is* of some relevance whether an operation is conducted from a single central command post, or from two or three ill-coordinated ones. No one would deny that. But, on the other hand, for those who were actually involved in the operation (I was in the German Service of the BBC) this was by no means as decisive as it appears to the assiduous student of top-level memoranda. For in fact, while the power-hungry bureaucrats at the summit were fighting for control of what to them seemed clearly distinct private domains, the field-officers and foot-soldiers of the operation worked so closely together on the ground that they frequently forgot who their actual masters were. Indeed, the power struggle at the top, of which the front-line personnel were well aware, even had beneficent results. As each focal point of power tried to strengthen its empire, each tried to enlarge its personnel; the result was that there was no shortage of potential talent at the front line. To be sure, the recruitment of personnel

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was carried out haphazardly and amateurishly. It produced a motley crew of distinguished exiled Continental intellectuals rubbing shoulders with British dons and schoolmasters who happened to know the relevant languages, as well as individuals of doubtful qualifications who were intent merely on dodging the actual fighting. There were some among them who worked very hard; others regarded their jobs merely as comfortable sinecures. Some were highly motivated as ardent anti-fascists; others were completely indifferent to the ideological conflict. What happened, however, was that the highly motivated ones who worked hard established contact with each other across the departmental boundaries, and left the lazy time-servers to do what they liked. Had there been a *single* controlling department with a "rational" personnel policy it might well have become much more difficult to create the basis for this process of natural selection which could take place among this artificially inflated pool of hastily recruited linguists, advertising men, and academics. While the power struggle raged at the top, personnel was freely interchangeable at the front line, and the cooperation between members of different organisations was very close. Thus in the sphere I knew best, the German Service of the BBC, some of the best programmes were written by members of PWE, others by BBC staffers. The difference was not apparent to the naked eye, and indeed only manifested itself in the source of their pay packets.

BUT, THE READER of Dr Cruickshank's book might interject, the *policy* was made high up in the hierarchy, and the power struggle between different departments must have reflected itself in that policy. There is certainly something to that, but not very much.

Here, again, one must make the distinction between the policy in theory and the actual words that came out on the air or were printed in the leaflets dropped by the RAF. The assumption (which clearly emerges from Dr Cruickshank's reading of official memoranda) that a policy line is—or more frequently is not—concocted high up and then dutifully translated into actual words down below is simply false. Just as in the shooting war most of the actual success of the strategic concept depends on the moment-to-moment initiative and skill of the men on the ground, in the propaganda war a very high proportion of the ideas and policies emerged from the actual writers and broadcasters. The higher up in the hierarchy, the less reality there was in the policy ideas. While the memoranda—and, to judge from the ones Dr Cruickshank quotes, they were pretty clueless anyway—passed to and fro at ministerial level, R. H. S. Crossman, who was in charge of actually

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formulating the policy directives for the broadcasts to Germany, black as well as white, cheerfully went his own way and communicated his ideas to us in the German section of the BBC every week. And we, in turn, then followed or ignored them at our own pleasure and by our own instinctive assessment of their worth. Conversely, ideas which originated at the front-line level were taken up by Dick Crossman, incorporated in his next directives, and might even have penetrated into the top-level memoranda. Indeed here, again, the grand power struggle might well have been beneficial in its ultimate results: the vacuum that was left by it could be filled by people infinitely more talented and more expert than the fuddy-duddies on top.

THERE IS ONE ASPECT of this matter which seems to me to be of crucial importance: namely, that the method of research tends to create its own system of values in the researcher's mind. Dr Cruickshank, desperately trying to make head or tail of a mass of confused and ill-filed memoranda, clearly developed a deep longing for administrative logic and order. Hence to him the confused jockeying for position in the empyrean of ministerial committees appears as a major sin, the source of weakness and of lack of control. He deplores the neglect of a proper administrative preparation of the propaganda war in the 1930s and the haste and confusion with which the propaganda machine was set up at the last moment.

That there should have been more foresight and greater preparedness is certainly true, at least in theory. But in practice it might well have been a blessing in disguise that the British effort in psychological warfare did not follow rigidly laid-down lines embodied in a tight administrative structure from the very beginning. The likelihood is that such lines would have been wrong (being based on the experience of the previous war) and that a pre-existing organisational pattern might have prevented the natural and organic growth of a very complex and highly efficient structure by trial and—often very considerable—error. Above all, a pre-existing organisation would have been less successful in the recruitment of the personnel which, in the end, produced an outstandingly successful propagandistic effort.

For what emerges more forcefully from Dr Cruickshank's book is that he has simply failed to grasp the actual process, the evolution of a highly refined system, by which the fourth arm developed into the powerful weapon it eventually became.

For example, Dr Cruickshank pours scorn on the so-called Freedom Stations which were established by the clandestine side of the propaganda organisation at the beginning of the War. These were transmitters which purported to be the voice of "underground movements" in Nazi Occupied countries or of dissident groups inside Hitler's Germany. He is right in thinking that they had little direct effect on the War. But what he fails to see is that out of these fumbling and at first amateurish operations there evolved one of the most brilliant concepts of all: the concept of the broadcasting station which pretends to be part of the official propaganda operation of the adversary's side. This concept came to fruition after the Germans had occupied large tracts of Europe in which they took over local radio transmitters and operated them as "soldiers' stations (*Soldatensender*)" under the management not of Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry but the *Wehrmacht*. These stations transmitted the main German domestic news bulletins, Hitler's speeches etc., but also broadcast local material contributed by members of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Only because he had acquired experience in the techniques of broadcasts purporting to emanate from within enemy territory could Sefton Delmer evolve the idea of establishing a spurious station of this sort in England. By pretending to be situated in German-occupied territory the "black" *Soldatensender* also made it possible for German listeners to ignore the ban on following foreign broadcasts. Many German listeners remained unaware to the very end of the War of the true nature of these programmes. And small wonder: they faithfully transmitted the German domestic news bulletins, opened and closed with *Heil Hitler* and the *Horst Wessel song*, and undermined the enemy's morale entirely by means of irony.

> Our new fighter plane is the best ever constructed. As soon as it overcomes its tendency of stalling when it reaches the speed of 300 km.p.h. (which regrettably has cost the lives of many of our heroic comrades) it will be invincible.

This was the pattern of its statements. Dr Cruickshank mentions a station which "picked up on a *Hellschreiber* [teleprinter] the transmissions of the *Deutsches Nachrichtenbureau*, the German news agency, and was thus able to transmit to Germany local news even before it was printed in the German press. . . ." But he does not seem to realise that this was the same station which was used to spread rumours, the same *Soldatensender*.

In actual fact the operation by which the BBC and the "black" stations were able to gain access to the *DNB*'s radio-transmitted teleprinter service was one of the most spectacular feats of the War. The radio-operated *Hellschreiber* was a German invention and the Nazis were unaware of the fact that its transmissions could be received by the British; to the end of the War they remained unable to understand how the BBC and the *Soldatensender* could have gained access to so much pre-embargoed material. The *Soldatensender* could

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thus inform soldiers about to be decorated with the Iron Cross days before the official announcement of their awards. It thereby established an unshakable reputation for news accuracy which enabled it to achieve the maximum impact for material which was designed to undermine enemy morale. The broadcasts of the *Soldatensender* between 1942 and 1945 were surely among the most brilliant feats of political warfare in history. Cruickshank's book gives no idea whatever of the nature of these broadcasts. For example, Dr Cruickshank seems to be unaware (probably because official memoranda avoided mentioning top-secret facts) that the *Soldatensender* was largely staffed by German prisoners-of-war who had volunteered to fight against the Nazis. No wonder the station sounded totally authentic with announcers who were unmistakably genuine German soldiers. Sefton Delmer describes all this in his autobiography. But because these facts are not in an official memorandum, must the "scientific" historian remain ignorant of them?

THE IMPACT of the *Soldatensender* transmissions was immense. To this day one finds among older people in Germany those who are still wondering where these broadcasts came from and who cannot believe that they were in fact of British origin. The *Soldatensender* could not effectively be banned by Goebbels, because it was not labelled as an enemy station. The BBC, on the other hand, was an official organ of the British and had an equally important part to play as the purveyor of the official British policy and of unassailably reliable British news. Here, too, the late start of the propaganda effort seems to me to have been, in the final outcome, beneficial. In the early phase of the War, when the Germans were obviously on top, "positive propaganda" or a pre-arranged policy would have done little good anyway. During this period a talented group of propagandists were slowly evolving the theory and practice of radio political warfare. Richard Crossman, Hugh Carleton Greene, Lindley Fraser, Marius Goring, Patrick Gordon Walker, David Graham, Christina Ogilvy, assisted by many outstanding German intellectuals like Heinrich Fischer (the editor of Karl Kraus' works), Richard Friedenthal (biographer of Goethe and Luther), Carl Brinitzer, Julius Gellner, Robert Lucas, Jan van Loewen, Bruno Adler—to name but a few—created a coherent and highly persuasive approach to broadcast propaganda: a judicious mixture of highly factual and reliable information with a steady stream of ideological material designed to counteract the spiritual devastation wrought by the Nazis in Germany.

The British defeats of 1940 and 1941 were put to good advantage by storing up a capital of faith in the truthfulness of BBC reporting: I still remember the meeting in which Dick Crossman insisted that the fall of Singapore should be presented in the news bulletin as one of the most painful defeats in the history of the British Empire—and how, years later, German prisoners-of-war would refer to that broadcast as the turning-point in their trusting BBC news. Another technique which Crossman and Greene formulated was that any definite commitment on Hitler's part as to the date of a future success should be mercilessly exploited by our side. After Hitler, in an Order-of-the-day to the Armed Forces at the end of 1940, declared that 1941 would be the year of Final Victory, the BBC started each news bulletin with the words "This is the news on the [say] 115th day of the year for which Hitler has promised Final Victory." One can imagine the impact of that formula on 31 December 1941, when the German armies stood deep inside Russia and "the end of the war" was further away than ever before. Similarly during the battle of Stalingrad, where Hitler had famously committed himself to taking the city, the BBC reported the battle every day, indicating how many days of the siege had passed and replaying Hitler's own voice with the promise that Stalingrad would shortly fall. This policy paid immense dividends on the day when the Nazis had to announce the defeat of their Sixth Army at Stalingrad.

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OF ALL THIS Dr Cruickshank's book, which purports to be a history of political warfare, knows nothing. Actual recordings of some of the War-time broadcasts still exist in the BBC's sound archives; but, of course, the scripts of most of the War-time output of the BBC have disappeared. Yet for someone with imagination and the persistence to interview survivors it would still be possible to reconstruct the actual content, the tone and the feel of both the BBC's and the *Soldatensender*'s output. For that is where the fourth arm really operated, not in the memoranda of Whitehall.

Since he failed to gain any clear idea of what political and propaganda warfare actually was like, one is not surprised to see that Dr Cruickshank's conclusions, which emerge from all his assiduous research among memoranda and would be the only justification for it, are also quite wrongheaded. He feels that the government should have controlled the BBC's broadcasts directly, although he categorically states that "the open broadcasting came through with flying colours. This fact has been testified to in many places and need not be further stressed. . . ." But he finds questionable Dick Crossman's statement that it was a good thing that the BBC's broadcasts were the result of a tug-of-war, a dialectical process between the government, insisting on more propagandistic content, and the BBC, stressing the need for more reliability and more hard fact. Here again, if he had talked to individuals actually involved he would have found ample confirmation that Crossman was right. As it is he says:

> Was it right that the balance between staight news and propaganda should be determined, not by the normal process of Whitehall, in which (more often than not) reasonable people sit round a table and come to a reasonable conclusion, but simply by the relative strengths of those who represented the two organisations?

O sancta simplicitas! Having demonstrated at great length and by ample quotation that the people sitting round a table in Whitehall were anything but capable of reaching reasonable conclusions, he advocates government control of propaganda broadcasting by committee. As broadcasts ultimately have to be made by broadcasters, no amount of committee directives would have made the slightest difference. It was in the very nature of things that what actually got on the air would always have to be the outcome of a dialectical process between directives wherever they originated and their executants. How much better was it to recognise that state of affairs *ab initio*, particularly as even Dr Cruickshank amply documents the fact that "the men on the top" in Whitehall were totally ignorant of both the theory and the practice of propaganda.

AND HERE I COME to another aspect of the problems of the methodology of writing history. It is not merely a matter of reading documents; not merely even a matter of interviewing surviving participants in the events; not merely a matter of actually reading the memoirs of such participants. The most important requirement in any historian writing the history of any event or operation is a knowledge of the subject-matter itself. One cannot, to stay with our example, write about broadcasting without knowing something, indeed all, *about* broadcasting. If Dr Cruickshank had done research in this field rather than among the dusty files he would have realised that there is a long way between the policy directive and the actual programme. He would have found that even in peace-time conditions, in an organisation as strictly defined as the BBC, the Board of Governors or the Director-General and even the heads of output departments find it quite difficult to maintain a firm control on policy, simply because it is impossible to vet every word that is spoken on the air beforehand and because "the men at the coal-face" always have the last decision on what is said. How much more difficult would such control have been over broadcasts in foreign languages, over clandestine transmitters, reacting hour-by-hour to the constantly changing fortunes of war.

FROM HIS MEMORANDA Dr Cruickshank was quite unable to surmise that all human activities ultimately depend on human personality. The interface between administrative structure and actual performance results from the quality of the personnel who are carrying out whatever the purpose of the administrative structure might be. The best administrative structure with bad personnel is useless; but even the worst administrative structure with talented and ingenious personnel will ultimately work, simply because the persons involved will ignore and transcend the administrative structure.

The real interest of a history of the propaganda war waged by Britain in the Second World War lies precisely in the answer to the question how a bad administrative structure (which Dr Cruickshank very clearly describes) could have resulted in such spectacular successes. And the answer here emerges from the fact I have already stated: that somehow, more by accident than by design, there were enough first-rate minds, enough genuine talent, enough enthusiasm among the many individuals (a good many of whom were less than useless) who got recruited into the operation. The reasons for this perhaps fortuitous circumstance are equally fascinating. I would suspect that they were twofold. First, there was the presence of a really outstanding élite of, in the case of propaganda to Germany, refugees of the highest

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intellectual and artistic calibre (as indeed was also the case among the French, Belgians, Italians, *et al.*) These expatriates, with their profound knowledge of conditions in Germany and of Germany's psychology and cultural background, were able to forge a policy where *no* policy was being formulated by the pundits in Whitehall. And, secondly, there was also the presence of unusually able young people among the British newspaper men (Delmer, Hugh Greene), academics (Lindley Fraser) and advertising men (Norman Cameron, for example) who got into the operation.

This, from the present-day point of view, seems to me the most disturbing aspect of the lessons this history would have to teach us. Where, today, could one find equally highly educated young men, with a sufficient knowledge of foreign languages, to match that generation? The decline in educational standards is too obvious. Where are the young politicians who, like Dick Crossman or Patrick Gordon Walker, could just go in front of a microphone and deliver an intricate political commentary in fluent German?

It is on matters of this nature much more than on the niceties of administrative arrangements that the ability of a society to survive may depend. There *are* real lessons to be learned from history. But for that a much more complex and refined methodology would be required than the naïve belief in memoranda and dusty, ill-ordered files.

Abandoned Prefabs

Recent Fiction—By TOM PAULIN

IN "PSYCHOPOLIS", the Californian and very contemporary story which concluded Ian McEwan's last collection of short stories, there is an account of an intimate conversation which takes place between some people who have just met. The English narrator remarks how this could never happen in England; an American character replies, "The English tell each other nothing", and the narrator answers, "Between telling nothing and telling everything there is very little to choose." English formality and Californian informal self-exploration are the two extremes, and somewhere there is a shadowy middle-ground represented by McEwan's favourite word, "between." His neat and casual aphorism points towards the imaginative centre of his short first novel.[1] Like "Psychopolis" it moves between two extremes.

The story is told by a boy called Jack whose "frail, irascible, obsessive" father covers his garden with a layer of cement. The father dies, the mother becomes ill and dies, and the four children give her "a private funeral" and then enter a domestic world which is entirely separate from the rest of society. There they look after themselves, like children marooned in a house on a cement island.

Privacy is one of the imaginative poles of a story whose ambiguities tease and fascinate me the more I reflect on it. McEwan's imagination moves between extremes of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, and he offers a series of charged phrases, images and atmospheres which give his story a mythic direction. Both domestic privacy and its opposite—society—are present in the young narrator's observation "I did not wish to be placed outside this intense community of work." They are present again in his father's wish to build "a high wall round his special world" in order to shield his garden from an urban landscape of demolished houses and "vacant sites . . . lush with weeds and their flowers." Some of the images have an extraordinary power: the derelict cement garden, the gardens of the abandoned prefabs, the fine black dust that blows "from the direction of the tower blocks", and the shovel lying in the centre of a round stain of dried cement "like the hour hand of a big broken clock." Jack thinks of all the "rooms that would one day collapse" and his description of this gutted prefab makes it resemble one of the "desolate places" in *Job*:

> I stood inside the blackened living room where the ceiling had collapsed and the floorboards burnt away. One partition wall remained and in its centre was a serving hatch connected with the kitchen. One of its small wooden doors was still on its hinges. In the kitchen broken sections of water pipe and electrical fittings clung to the wall, and on the floor was a smashed sink. In all the rooms tall weeds were struggling for the light. Most houses were crammed with immovable objects in their proper places, and each object told you what to do—here you ate, here you slept, here you sat. But in this burned-out place there was no order, everything had gone. I tried to imagine carpets, wardrobes, pictures, chairs, a sewing machine, in these gaping, smashed-up rooms. I was pleased by how irrelevant, how puny such objects now appeared. There was a mattress in one room, buckled between the blackened, broken joists. The wall was crumbling away round the window, and the ceiling had

[1] *The Cement Garden*. By IAN MCEWAN. Jonathan Cape, £3.50.

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> fallen in without quite reaching the ground. The people who slept on that mattress, I thought, really believed they were in "the bedroom." They took it for granted that it would always be so.

Obsessively, McEwan returns to images of dereliction, arbitrary living-spaces, family and the absence of family, guilt and its absence. In these burnt-out places there is no order—nature is dead, the city is dead, and the world is drained of meaning. What his fiction designs, I think, is a fable of a dead public world and an intensely private reality (versions of the "everything and nothing" of "Psychopolis"). Using imagery drawn from the great waste places of the inner city he shows how the life of the emotions is like a weed flowering in a social desert.

In *The Cement Garden* we see a wish for an introverted independence cutting against a wish for dependence, a desire to live in a world without parents crossing a dream of a saving love. It's as though McEwan's imagination moves between images of public sterility and private sterility. He explores various tensions and strategies of meaning without offering a definite resolution (perhaps this kind of radical irony is an essential quality of pastoral; certainly Marvell employs it).

Innocence, too, is essential to pastoral and when Jack smooths away the impression which his father's body makes in "the soft, fresh concrete" there is an interesting echo of the title-story of *In Between The Sheets* where a man gazes at his supposedly innocent daughter:

> . . . she was asleep and almost smiling, and in the pallor of her upturned throat he thought he saw from one bright morning in his childhood a field of dazzling white snow which he, a small boy of eight, had not dared scar with footprints.

McEwan has a strange notion of a sort of demonic or delinquent innocence which seeks to reflect itself in the blankness of a *tabula rasa*. It refuses experience and yet engages in sexual games that are part childish, part adult—the between state of early adolescence is his chosen territory. But what seems like a fixed state is in fact a stage in a natural process, and this is evident in the complicated situation at the end of the novel where Julie's boyfriend, Derek, is presented as an intruding stranger from the outside world. Julie says that he wants "to be one of the family . . . big smart daddy." In order to join the family he would have to share the guilty secret of the mother's grave in the cellar and turn his back on the outside world. This he refuses to do: he discovers the cement tomb and then fetches the police. To the children this seems like a betrayal. And yet the revolving blue light of the police car signals their difficult liberation into a world where a union may be possible between the public and private extremes which so occupy McEwan's imagination. Certainly, the children will now be cared for by an official and public agency—they will be the objects of charity, not love—and so there is no point in twisting a moral of maturity and responsibility from the ending. But it does show the necessary defeat of a wish to say "It's none of your business" to all that is outside the juvenile family. Julie throws this phrase at her boyfriend just before he destroys their fetid domestic pastoral.

McEwan's novel is a superb achievement: his prose has an intent lucid beauty and his narrative voice has a perfect poise and certainty. His account of deprivation and survival is marvellously sure, and the imaginative alignment of his story is exactly right.

WILLIAM TREVOR is one of the acknowledged masters of the short story.[2] He is an Anglo-Irish writer who now lives in Devon and so he is an exiled member of a disappearing social class whose complex contradictions he shrewdly places in this description of a small Protestant schoolroom in the Irish Republic:

> There were portraits of England's kings and queens around the walls, painted by some teacher in the past. There were other pictures, added at some later date, of Irish heroes: Niall of the Nine Hostages, Lord Edward FitzGerald, Wolfe Tone and Grattan. Maps of Europe and of Ireland and of England, Wales and Scotland hung side by side.

This is Trevor's heritage and it is at once his strength and his weakness. It enables him to present with the most accurate sympathy that desperately principled Irish intransigence which in "Another Christmas" makes an otherwise gentle Irish exile destroy a long-standing friendship. Dermot is unable to forgive his English friend for mildly disagreeing with him about Irish terrorism. His momentary fanaticism ruins the old man's Christmas and permanently scars Dermot's relationship with his wife. Trevor tells the story with that impartial economy which is one of the most remarkable features of his writing.

Often Trevor returns to that notoriously Irish condition of being trapped by racial memories and historical bitterness. Usually he treats this subject with a resigned detachment which is effective and appealing, but sometimes the contradictions that underlie his detachment make him the passive victim of a nostalgia for vanished decencies. In a trilogy of stories called "Matilda's England" he describes an Englishwoman who hates the present and who believes that "there's nothing wrong with

[2] *Lovers Of Their Time*. By WILLIAM TREVOR. The Bodley Head, £4.95.

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living in the past." Here, Trevor appears to be justly critical of that national nostalgia which keeps *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* at the top of the bestseller lists—he seems, in other words, to be investigating an English fixation with the past. And yet the three stories are suffused with loving memories of lost summers and lush pastures, and there is a most curious moment when Matilda looks at old Mrs Ashburton whose husband was killed in the First World War:

> I understood her law of averages and her sitting alone in her dark kitchen, crying over the past. I cried myself, thinking of the grass growing on her tennis court, and the cruelty that was natural.

Trevor very rarely springs a fine and arresting phrase like "the cruelty that was natural" on his readers, and it makes an excellent conclusion for the story. Unfortunately, the cadence of the phrase is unmistakably Irish and because the story is so deeply English it sounds badly out of context, as though Matilda has momentarily changed nationality. For Trevor, an obsession with the past is a kind of madness—Matilda's nostalgia eventually drives her mad—and yet there is a deep dislike of contemporary reality in his stories.

In "Broken Homes", for example, the delinquent children who desecrate old Mrs Malby's flat assume a parabolic significance, and this is especially evident when Mrs Malby thinks of their school—Tite Comprehensive—and sees "an ugly sprawl of glass and concrete buildings, children swinging along the pavements, shouting obscenities." This is an intensely succinct image of how the modern world appears to Trevor, and it would be wrong to dismiss it as reactionary. No opinion should interfere with an appreciation of the unforced artistry and superb economy of this brilliant story. The children's violation of the old woman's decent privacy is registered with such accuracy that one can only admire its narrative perfection.

In "Torridge" Trevor establishes the personality of a naive and lonely schoolboy through a few conversational mannerisms: "Dad's in the button business—Torridge's you know." Torridge becomes a figure of fun who serves to seal the friendship of three contemporaries—Mace-Hamilton, Wiltshire, and Arrowsmith. None of the senior pupils ever selects Torridge as his "*bijou*" or "male tart" and so he remains isolated from that phase of male homosexuality which appears to be obligatory in all public schools. The years pass and Torridge's three contemporaries have periodic reunions at which their wives, and later their children, are forced to listen to their accounts of the old school and its assorted eccentrics—including Torridge who gradually becomes a myth within the

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three families. At last they invite him to one of their reunions. The three schoolboys are middle-aged men by this time and life has been variously kind and unkind to them. When Torridge appears he is suave, confident and rather sinister: he is no longer the comic butt, the lasting joke that binds a triangular friendship, and he effortlessly destroys the shabby snobberies and forced hilarity of the reunion by revealing that he is homosexual, just as Arrowsmith and his cronies once were. And he also reveals that their schoolboy cruelty was responsible for the suicide of one of the senior pupils. Trevor's narrative has a ballad-like inevitability and momentum, and as in a folk-tale we watch the spectre of justice appearing at the feast. It's as though the Green Knight has appeared in the dining-room of the Woodlands Hotel, Richmond.

"Torridge", like "Broken Homes", is a masterpiece, and yet there is a quality in Trevor's prose and characterisation which is curiously processed and ersatz: the characters speak in the clipped twittering accents of British films of the 1940s (a grocer asks, "What can I entice you to, sir?"). Many of the characters—the Reverend Throataway, for example—are as flat as the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker in the card game of Happy Families, and the prose style somehow manages to possess both a spare simplicity and a superannuated drabness. Norman Britt and Marie in the title-story are more like meek Edwardians than lovers in the 1960s. All too often Trevor settles for a decent, tolerant, middle-brow obviousness, a kind of synthetic mustiness. It's rather like being presented with an exact reproduction of a bakelite wireless set, switching it on and hearing Alvar Liddell reading the 10 o'clock news. The oddly dated atmosphere of Trevor's stories is the main obstacle to a more complete—and more generous—appreciation of his talent.

TRADITIONALLY, John Bull is a bloody-minded, insular, beer-swilling, xenophobic philistine with a thick neck and a truculent manner. He hates wogs, he hates the young, and he wishes women would disappear as soon as it's over. This choleric figure has been lying low of late, and I'm sorry to report that he has dictated a novel to a battered amanuensis called Kingsley Amis. His novel[3] has half-a-dozen good jokes, a brilliant title, but it is often tedious and sometimes insolently stupid. It tells the story of an Oxford don, Jake Richardson, who has been surprised by impotence in middle-age and who is the vehicle for a series of complaints about scruffy girls, hotel meals, the GPO, feminism, bloody foreigners, bad bus services and incompetent taxi-drivers.

As Amis—or John Bull—charts this banal hell of rancid grievances and utterly average sensuality he has the cheek to suggest that undergraduates today are a poor lot who are vandalising the English language. Some of them undoubtedly write badly, but perhaps they will do better in time, and anyway it's nonsense to suggest that there was a golden age of good English before the advent of comprehensive schools. More of Amis's prose emphatically means worse. Take this sentence:

> Jake stood at the window in thought, though not of any very purposeful description, for a couple of minutes.

And this rasping description of girls passing in the street:

> Apart from their dirtiness, which was often no more extreme than a look of entire neglect as in a hermit or castaway, they tended to have in common smallness of frame that wasn't quite slimness, smallness of feature that went with roundness of head, dark-blonde colouring and nothing to shout about in the way of tits, so much not so that the odd one here and there was probably a boy: anyhow, there were enough such to point to a large secret migration from (as it might have been) Schleswig-Holstein.

This desecration of a once-noble language is evident throughout the novel. The sentences are often jammed with infinitives:

[3] *Jake's Thing*. By KINGSLEY AMIS. Hutchinson, £4.95.

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> Jake took him on to dessert and gave him port; to help to seem to be giving rather than plying with he took a small glass himself.

No undergraduate in my experience has ever written as badly as this. Reading Amis's prose is like getting kicked in the stomach—I found myself virtually retching at its sheer awfulness. And what does he mean by "an O'Casey peasant"? Someone Irish, I suppose—the sort of chap who has a name like Synge and writes plays called *The Plough and the Stars*. Again, the kind of mistake that an undergraduate might be forgiven for making, but no one—except the small circle of Black Paper chums this novel glances at—will forgive Amis for writing so badly.

However, some of his targets are well-chosen: academic laziness, waterlogged Brussels sprouts, the more lunatic extremes of the Women's Movement, and a certain Oxford don who writes plays. But throughout there is a huge imaginative slackness and a heavy obviousness. And behind the brusquely average cynicism there is a tone of plaintive self-pity and puzzled misogyny. It's as though all his life Amis has been obediently following the advice that every sergeant major used to give his men before they left the barracks for a night on the town: a shit, a shave, and a shampoo. Now, Amis has begun to wonder if this advice wasn't just a shade too basic, too functional, too stupid. But his total lack of imaginative distinction and fineness tells him that the sergeant major was bloody well right and damn anyone who disagrees. Like the most vulgar materialist, the bullish national archetype has named all the parts, barked out a few orders, and that's the end of it. Women, Jake concludes, are a lot of foreigners anyway and they always were a waste of a man's time. And at the end of the novel, when Jake is offered a new treatment which will repair his libido, he responds by summoning every woman he has known on to his mental parade-ground.

> Jake did a quick run-through of women in his mind, not of the ones he had known or dealt with in the past few months or years so much as all of them: their concern with the surface of things, with objects and appearances, with their surroundings and how they looked and sounded in them, with seeming to be better and to be right while getting everything wrong, their automatic assumption of the role of injured party in any clash of wills, their certainty that a view is the more credible and useful for the fact that they hold it, their use of misunderstanding and misrepresentation as weapons of debate, their selective sensitivity to tones of voice, their unawareness of the difference in themselves between sincerity and insincerity, their interest in importance (together with noticeable inability to discriminate in that sphere), their fondness for general conversation and directionless discussion, their pre-emption of the major share of feeling, their exaggerated estimate of their own plausibility, their never listening and lots of other things like that, all according to him. So it was quite easy. "No thanks", he said.

It's a sad assertion of defeated machismo, and if anyone thinks that phrase "all according to him" refers to Jake, and not Amis, then they can't tell crude bad artistry from good.

IN HER NEW NOVEL[4] Iris Murdoch cleverly sets a late-Auden manner in a northern landscape similar to those in Auden's early poetry. We know that Auden wrote a great verse-commentary on *The Tempest*, and we know, too, that Prospero and Shakespeare are kin. Furthermore, towards the end of his life Henry James wrote a preface to *The Tempest*. This information is relevant because Murdoch's central character, a retired theatre director called Charles Arrowby, was born in Stratford and thinks he was "a good Prospero" in his acting days. Also, he reads *The Wings of the Dove* which he dismisses as "another story of death and moral smash-up"—a sort of sophisticated

[4] *The Sea, The Sea*. By IRIS MURDOCH. Chatto and Windus, £5.50.

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episode of *The Archers*. The signposting is extremely clear: this is Iris Murdoch's nineteenth novel and it's about time someone called her Shakespearian, or at least Jamesian (the Booker prize seems a small thing in this context).

UNFORTUNATELY, this novel is one of those stories which advertise a meaning on every page. Its theme is the "agony of protective possessive love" and a desire "to repent of egoism." But good writers don't think in terms of themes, and the result of Murdoch's self-consciousness about what she is saying is that her novel resembles an academic thesis about love and possession in a novel called *The Sea, The Sea*. It is a doctoral dissertation in search of an absent text. And it is the production of the most extreme ambition allied to a mislaid intelligence and a consistently preposterous prose style:

> I told her that the affair was temporary, that my love for her was temporary, and doubtless her love for me was temporary. I spoke of mortality and the fragile and shadowy nature of human arrangements and the jumbled unreality of human minds, while her large light brown eyes spoke to me of the eternal. She said, I want to be perfect for you so that you can leave me without pain, and this perfect expression of love simply irritated me.

There is an argument from irony which says that all bad writing is really good writing in disguise because the author is for various subtle reasons deliberately writing badly. This argument doesn't work here—if indeed it ever does—because Iris Murdoch maintains an affected and rotten style for 500 pages. She does offer some excellent advice about cooking courgettes (boil them), but it has to be said that *The Sea, The Sea* is one of those pointless fantasies which donnish minds and narrow hearts are prone to.

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[5] *The Flounder*. By GÜNTER GRASS. Translated by RALPH MANHEIM. Secker & Warburg, £5.95.

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"UPON THE DEMON-RIDDEN PILGRIMAGE of human life, what next I wonder?" The last sentence of the new Murdoch leads inescapably to the new Grass.[5] Both novels are full of recipes and both are ambitious failures. Günter Grass presents a rambling account of cultural change from neolithic matriarchy to recent patriarchy and modern feminism: "The male cause is washed up. A world crisis will soon signal the end of male domination." Grass is profoundly worried by the Women's Movement, as this long speech which the narrator makes to his wife, Ilsebill, shows:

> For suppose, Ilsebill, that feminine solidarity should become the rule in more and more feminist convents and conventual workshops, so that woman can no longer be played off against woman in accordance with the rites of sexual competition or on the basis of a usually doll-like ideal of beauty such as men keep dreaming up in their need to cloak the unchanging dependency of women in ever-new disguises; suppose, Ilsebill, there were feminist convents all over the world and these convents wielded economic power; suppose that traditional patriarchal marriage were observed only by a vanishing minority of the population, that children engendered by free choice but without obligation or paternity claims grew to adulthood in these convents, and that female reason, possibly abetted by a male intelligence aware of its own inadequacy, ushered in a new, nunnish matriarchy, and consequently that male-dated history would stop happening, that there would be no more wars, that male ambition and progress mania would stop sending rockets and super-rockets out into mindless cosmic space . . . suppose, I repeat, that feminist convents, memorials to the abbess Margarete Rusch, sprang up on every hand, and that you (though more than two months pregnant—by me) were to enter such a convent tomorrow in order to be free, liberated, no longer subjugated or possessed by me or anyone else, would you then—supposing all this came to pass—let me, simply as a man, drop in on you for a little while?

This is the authentic voice of a dominating and tyrannical male—shouting, swaggering, brow-beating, and finally cajoling. It begins as a bullying lecture and ends with a whimper. It displays a superficial sympathy with feminism, while actually satirising it.

Grass structures his novel by employing the stock device of a court case in which a group of feminists try the Flounder who "embodies the principle of male domination." He includes numerous dull poems, some attractive Baltic recipes for dishes like beef heart stuffed with prunes in beer, and he meanders through countless

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centuries in an entirely self-indulgent manner. His fictional pilgrimage—like Amis's and Murdoch's—is a demon-ridden tour of his own ego. What is curious is that Grass's novel has been harshly—and fairly—reviewed in this country, while *Jake's Thing* and *The Sea, The Sea* have been hailed with the most abject praise. The reason is not hard to guess.

AUTHORS

Daphne Merkin (born 1954) is a graduate of Barnard College and of Columbia University. Her work—fiction and non-fiction—has appeared in *Commentary, The New Leader, The New Republic*, and other American journals.

Douglas Dunn is the author of *Terry Street* (1969), *The Happier Life* (1972) and *Love or Nothing* (1974). Faber & Faber will bring out his latest volume of poems, *Barbarians*, this spring.

Martin Esslin is Professor of Drama, Stanford University, and from 1963-77 was Head of Radio Drama at the BBC. He is the author of many books on theatre—among the most recent are *An Anatomy of Drama* (Temple Smith, 1976) and *Artaud* (John Calder, 1976).

Malcolm Bradbury is Professor of American Literature at the University of East Anglia. His most recent novel, *The History Man*, was published by Secker & Warburg (1975) and in paperback by Arrow Books (1978). He is the Editor of *The Novel Today* (Manchester University Press and Fontana, 1977). His two-part essay (the first section appeared in the November 1978 ENCOUNTER) is a revised version of a talk given at the National Gallery in London, in its "Words and Images" lecture series.

Tom Paulin is a Lecturer in English at Nottingham University. He is the author of *Thomas Hardy: The Poetry of Perception* (Macmillan, 1976), and his volume of poems *A State of Justice* (Faber) was the Spring 1977 Choice of the Poetry Book Society.

Sidney Hook was Professor of Philosophy at New York University and is now Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, California. His latest books include a co-edited volume on the role of government in higher education, *The University and the State* (Prometheus Books, 1978), *Revolution, Reform and Social Justice* (Blackwell, 1976), and *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life* (Basic Books, 1975).

Leopold Labedz is editor of *Survey* Magazine, a London quarterly. He edited the standard volume of *Revisionism* (1963), and *Solzhenitsyn: A Documentary Record* (Penguin, 1972). Among his articles in ENCOUNTER are "Raymond Aron's Vindication" (September 1977) and "The Two Minds of George Kennan" (April 1978).

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David Caute's Fable of "Fear & Terror"

On "Reverse McCarthyism"—By SIDNEY HOOK

IT IS a well known phenomenon that without containing a single falsehood, a description of an historical situation, personage or event can still be a lying account. Indeed, every statement made may be literally true, and yet the drift and impact of the whole story egregiously false. This approach is the stock in trade of clever and unscrupulous attorneys in an adversary procedure more concerned with saving a client than in seeing justice done. Dishonest journalists under the pretext of advocacy-reporting resort to similar techniques. And it is an old story that political demagogues out to smear an opponent or to make the worse appear the better cause are adept in using some truths to conceal or distort the facts. But whatever the circumstances of the use of such methods, there is absolutely no place for it in any undertaking that professes to be a contribution to scholarly understanding.

David Caute's *The Great Fear* [1] is a massive volume that has the appearance of a scholarly work that has been meticulously researched with more than a hundred pages of notes, references and bibliographical items. The appearance is deceptive. It is an impassioned political attack by a British author against the policy of the United States at the end of the Second World War when with the resumption of Communist aggression against the West and the revelations of the pervasive nature of Soviet espionage, a loyalty and security programme was introduced by the government. The period covered includes the Hiss, Rosenberg, and Coplon trials, and the conviction of the leaders of the Communist Party under the Smith Act, as well as the Korean War, McCarthy's demagogic crusade and the entire era of "the Cold War." The villains are *not* the Communists, all of whom were staunch Stalinists who supported without qualification every infamy of the Kremlin. They are gently chided by Caute for not standing up on occasion more firmly for their principles. Nor is it Joseph McCarthy and his disciples whose role, for all its irresponsible demagogy, Caute regards as "historically healthy" because its very extremism shocked the public into awareness that liberty was "not easily divisible." The real villains were the "Cold War liberals" or "liberal anti-Communists" who detested both the Communists and McCarthy's methods of combating them. Caute's moral indignation is directed mainly against them. Because as liberals they believed in principled opposition to Communism as well as to Fascism, they prepared the way, according to Caute, for reactionaries who, like McCarthy, found difficulty in distinguishing between socialists and Communists, between heretics and conspirators. From Caute's position, Harry Truman is more to blame than Joe McCarthy, and those who defended "the vital centre" against totalitarianism of every cut and colour were a greater threat to genuine freedom and democracy than the Communists.

Throughout the volume, Caute seeks to establish an equation between the American security programme under Truman and the Stalinist terror régime while admitting that the first resulted in tears, the second in rivers of blood. He sees what happened in America as the logical consequence of a struggle to impose the *Pax Americana* on the world in the struggle against the *Pax Sovietica.*

> "Both Washington and Moscow were now committed not merely to a Manichaean struggle for the allegiance (or subservience) of the world, but also to absolute conformity [*sic!*] among their own citizens."

Caute doesn't bother to explain what American actions in Europe in 1948 corresponded to the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, the merciless Soviet repressions in the Baltic countries, and the seizure of power in Poland and other Eastern European nations. Nor does he point to any Soviet

[1] *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist purge under Truman and Eisenhower.* By DAVID CAUTE. Simon & Schuster, $14.95; Secker & Warburg, £9.95.

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analogue of the Marshall Plan and of the American willingness to surrender its monopoly of atomic weapons (the Baruch-Lilienthal proposals) to an international authority. And as for the American desire to impose "absolute conformity" on its citizens, it is a pity that he does not cite the decrees of the US Cabinet or Congress laying down the proper American party line in all fields from art and astronomy to zoology which presumably parallel the decrees of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party in these areas, violations of which often resulted in imprisonment and sometimes death.

That Caute can bring himself to write this way is some indication of how far his obsessions can take him. They soon show themselves to be beyond any rational control.

THE RESULT OF Caute's survey of the period is a fantasy picture of a nation swept by hysterias of fear synthetically contrived by its political leaders. A reader unfamiliar with the political climate of these years would never guess from Caute's account that there was an objective danger of war with the Soviet Union and that from June 1950 on the United States was actually involved in an undeclared war with Communist North Korea, and shortly later with Communist China, that threatened to burst into a world conflagration. To compare this period with the genuine reign of terror in the United States that existed immediately after World War I—when there was not the slightest threat to the security of the United States and when most excesses by law enforcement authorities were of an extra-legal character—is to abuse language. Caute echoes the declaration of a Communist fellow-travelling organisation that the measures taken to prevent Communist infiltration into government and to expose Communist activities in American cultural life constituted "the most serious threat to civil liberties in our [US] history." Even granting the absurdity of some of these measures, the judgment is clear evidence not only of historical ignorance but of political animus.

The gravest intellectual deficiency in Caute's work is its failure to state fairly and come to grips with the arguments and evidence of those whom he denounces. He doesn't argue—he merely jeers. The books and speeches of the leading cold war liberals and socialists who waged energetic campaigns against *both* Communism and McCarthyism—of Norman Thomas, Elmer Davis, Walter Lippmann, David Dubinsky, Walter Reuther, Arthur Schlesinger jr., Hubert H. Humphrey, to name only a few—are practically ignored. The result is that Caute fails to make certain elementary distinctions which must be recognised by anyone familiar with the theory and practice of Communism, and endowed with a modicum of common sense. He does not distinguish between the necessity of a security programme and the mistakes or excesses of its application, seemingly convinced that the occasional existence of the latter totally invalidates the former. In keeping with this view, to Caute it makes no difference whether a person is truly or falsely accused of being a member of the Communist Party. In either case he or she is the innocent victim of a witch hunt. And despite the record, he seems convinced that Communists are not more harmful than witches. Indeed just as the fear of witches constitutes a greater danger than witches, so to him the fear of Communism is a greater danger to democracy than the Communist movement.

At first blush, the most charitable interpretation of Caute's approach to the period he is discussing and the issues at stake is that it is a compound of political ignorance and naïveté. Even so, it is an approach worth examining because it explains in large part the state of mind, sincerely held in the case of some British officials, that made it possible for Fuchs, Allan Nunn May, Burgess, Maclean, Philby, Pontecorvo among others, to escape detection in the performance of services for the Kremlin, and whose mischievous effects for the free world to this day have not been properly assessed. This laxity and indifference towards ideological allegiance and commitment was also characteristic of the American administration before the Igor Gouzenko case broke in Canada and the publication of the explosive Royal Commission Report.[2] If anything, American officialdom at the outset was more at fault because since August 1939 it had in its possession a list of highly placed Communists in US government service who were feeding information to the Soviet Union.

AMERICAN LIBERALISM before the Roosevelt New Deal era was unconcerned with the problem of security except in the guise of social security. In the main it was an opposition movement to entrenched political privilege, allied at times with populism in the interest of the social and economic "underdog." Only gradually, painfully and confusedly did it become aware of the emergence of Fascist and Communist movements working in concert with foreign powers whose threat created a problem of political security without which the desirable social securities of a democratic welfare state might be lost. It was none other than Roger Baldwin who, together with Norman Thomas had organised the American Civil Liberties Union, which once was the conscience of

[2] *The Report of the Royal Commission to Investigate the Facts Relating to and Circumstances Surrounding the Communication by Public Officials and Other Persons in Positions of Trust of Secret and Confidential Information to Agents of a Foreign Power* (Ottawa, 1946).

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genuine American liberalism, who declared that "a superior loyalty to a foreign government disqualifies a citizen from service to his own." In the case of the German-American Bund, Caute has no difficulty in recognising the common-sense justification of the safeguard. But with respect to the American Communist Party, he exhibits the typical ritualistic liberal syndrome, viz.—democracy has no real enemies on its Left, for Communists are extreme liberals, misguided, but well-intentioned, at most heretics not conspirators. Except for Communist Party leaders, he is often loath to identify those whose views are indistinguishable from the official party line as "Communists." They are referred to as "Leftists."

Amazing but true. Caute refuses to recognise that in the days of monolithic Stalinism, long before the emergence of polycentrism and Euro-Communism, the American Communist Party was a Leninist party, controlled in its programme and leadership by the Kremlin, organised with an underground apparatus, its membership largely secret, identified by party names, and subject to the discipline of expulsion by a Control Commission in the event that a party order was disobeyed. There is a whole library of literature on this subject as well as on the canonic doctrines of belief concerning the use of force and violence, more specifically the ultimate necessity of armed uprisings, in the conquest of political power. Caute would have us believe that the American Communist Party was forced underground by the Smith Act indictments in 1948. This is false. Whatever one believes about the wisdom of the Smith Act, whose necessity was questioned by many of the Cold War liberals whose integrity Caute impugns—the Act was applauded by the Communist Party when it was invoked against the Trotskyists!—the Communist Party, in accordance with Lenin's directives, and indeed as a condition of its affiliation with the Communist International, had a parallel underground organisation from the very beginning.

One may attribute to credulity Caute's acceptance of the Communist Party claim that it was just an ordinary American political party, like any other, and therefore membership in or association with it, should be treated in the same way as membership in, or association with, other political partners. But unless there are no limits to Caute's credulity, it is hard to escape the impression of disingenuousness on his part, when he buys the apologetic explanation of leaders of the Communist Party when confronted with their own party texts, that they really did not believe in force and violence except in resisting a counter-revolutionary rebellion against a democratic majority that has come peacefully to power. But this is what any party that accepts democracy believes! How then explain the absolute control of the American Communist Party by the Kremlin down to the ditching of Earl Browder? Caute is aware that at a time when war with the Soviet Union over the blockade of Berlin was a real possibility the leaders of the Communist Party openly pledged that in such an eventuality their party would support the Soviet Union with every means at their disposal. To Caute this stand was still a harmless heresy, a mere matter of words, for "no plausible evidence ever emerged to prove that the CP drew contingency plans to sabotage vital industries and lines of communication in the event of war." A Fifth Column in place does not need to draw up plans in advance. In any case it is absurd to demand proof of detailed sabotage or espionage plans as a precondition for barring declared enemies from any official position of influence. As a matter of fact, a strike engineered by a Communist Party leadership in a key industry under the pretext of fighting some "job issue" could have an even more disastrous effect than a few monkey wrenches in the machinery.

THE INCONTROVERTIBLE POINT here is not that Communist Party membership or leadership is or should be a criminal offence—so far as I know only Walter Lippman favoured outlawing the Communist Party—but that membership in the Communist Party as it was organised and oriented *at that time* was certainly *relevant*, among other considerations, in determining who was a security risk in government services or in industries related to defence. Nor in the light of all the available evidence does it follow that *every* member of the Communist Party is *ipso facto* a Fifth Columnist or espionage agent. Surely, it may be objected, and this is implicit in Caute's criticism of the American security programme, a person may be a member of the Communist Party and pledge to defend the Soviet Union at all costs, and yet when actually called upon to redeem his pledge be unwilling to betray his country. Is it not possible for some members of the Communist Party to be loyal to their own country, despite their ideology, rather than to the Soviet Union, "the worker's fatherland"?

The best answer to this question was made by Clement Attlee after Dr Pontecorvo had fled from England and the empty stables were firmly locked. "There is no way", the Prime Minister told the House of Commons,

> "of distinguishing such [hypothetically loyal Communists] from those who, if opportunity offered, would be prepared to endanger the security of the state in the interests of another power. The Government has, therefore, reached the conclusion that the only prudent course to adopt is to ensure that no one who is known to be a member of the Communist Party, *or to be associated with it in such a way as to raise legitimate doubts about his or her reliability*, is

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> employed in connection with work, the nature of which is vital to the security of the State." (My italics.)

The connection may extend to apparently humble positions. Caute keeps on insisting that the Communist Party was no more than a gnat; but even by his own account, it was more like a swarm of gnats. And although one could dispute the methods used to get rid of gnats—some gnats carry deadly disease germs—apparently Caute would simply ignore them until they did their work of contamination.

In any case, comparison of the Communist Party to a gnat seems somewhat bizarre. Its influence especially through its transmission-belt organisations on the cultural-political life of the US during the 1930s was enormous. It has been amply documented by Eugene Lyons' *The Red Decade* (1942) among other publications. Its domination of the national student and youth movements and the mass anti-Fascist organisations was typical. During the 1940s, it recovered from the temporary set-back of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and acquired considerable strength in the trade union movement. Its potential as a disorganising factor in production and shipping seems to have been recognised by Roosevelt himself. According to Josephine Truslow Adams, after Earl Browder served his sentence for passport fraud, Roosevelt transmitted messages to Browder through her to help ensure industrial peace and to suggest that the CP run no third party candidates outside of New York State in the elections of 1944. (There are some intimations in Communist writings of at least one private meeting between Browder and Roosevelt.) As late as 1948, after the "great fear" and "terror" had begun, the CP was able to launch the Progressive Party which at the beginning seemed designed to be helpful to Thomas Dewey whose victory was preferable at the time to the Kremlin. Although the Progressive Party vote fell far short of expectations, as a result largely of the brazenness of CP control of Henry Wallace's campaign, the very fact that the CP could put on a national third party ticket in the field (a notoriously difficult operation in those days because of restrictive state registration laws) testifies to the extent and efficiency of the organisation.

Some gnat!

AS FOR CAUTE'S DISCUSSION of Communist espionage trials, it is very curious indeed. He keeps on referring to American "hysteria" about the trials, overlooking both the characteristic openness with which the American press discusses any kind of criminal proceedings and the number and variety of appeals the American legal system provides to those convicted. His summaries of the trials of Alger Hiss and of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg are very sympathetic to the defendants. He does not accept the evidence of Hiss's guilt. Nothing reveals his bias so blatantly as his final comment on the Rosenberg case in which he treats Kim Philby's acknowledgment of the Rosenbergs' guilt as equally evidential with a fictional scene from E. L. Doctorow's novel. Philby wrote:

> "Fuchs not only confessed his own part in the business, he also identified from photographs his contact in the US, Harry Gold. From Gold, who was in a talkative mood, the chain led inexorably to the Rosenbergs, who were duly electrocuted."

Caute remarks: "Such evidence, of course, is merely suggestive." "Merely suggestive"? Why should Britain's master spy who enjoyed the Kremlin's confidence refer this way to the Rosenbergs? Why should he believe that the chain of evidence "led inexorably" to the Rosenbergs? "Equally suggestive", according to Caute, is a purely fictional account by Doctorow of the Rosenberg case in which some character remarks out of the blue that the evidence against them, which withstood repeated appeals, was "phony." Only a deep-seated bias can blind one to the likelihood that Philby knows more about the Rosenberg case than Doctorow.

Because security procedures had been absent or slack, when they were first introduced, there were, not unexpectedly, many mistakes and excesses in the American security programme. It was the liberals whom Caute attacks who did the most to help the innocent victims of these excesses. It was not the procedures of the American Review Boards that were so much at fault—actually in crucial respects they were fairer than the UK Review Boards.[3] The situation was exacerbated by two factors: (*1*) the failure to understand on the part of many boards as well as of their vehement critics like Caute that the problem of security is primarily not one of detection and punishment, but of prevention and avoidance; and (*2*) because they were staffed not by knowledgeable men and women, who in addition to common sense possessed political sophistication and experience, but by typical investment bankers, corporation lawyers, Republican and Democratic Party regulars, who could hardly distinguish among New Deal liberals, Socialists and Communists, and were altogether mystified by the varieties and kinds of ideological allegiances and organisational affiliations of those investigated.

THE TROUBLED TIMES, the conjunction of espionage cases at home and abroad, the objective danger of a Third World War, all created

[3] British civil servants under investigation were rarely told of the evidence against them. They had no right to legal counsel or even to representation. Judging by the absence of appeals to them, English courts seem to have little jurisdiction over dismissals from government service.

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an atmosphere which made it easy for cultural vigilantes who had their own special axes to grind to press for loyalty oaths. These were not only irrelevant to national security—no oaths ever stopped a traitor—but insulting to honest dissenters. Irresponsible charges of communism were hurled against individuals who took unorthodox stands in the field of morals and religion. These outrages, which culminated even though they did not cease with McCarthy's charges against individuals within government and out, were documented and publicly opposed by those whom Caute holds, because of their opposition to both Communists and the cultural vigilantes, chiefly responsible for the excesses.

Once it was established that the American Communist Party, whatever its other activities were, functioned as a foreign arm of the Soviet Union, public concern was aroused about the behaviour of its members in other areas of life unrelated to government service and defence industry. The source of the greatest confusion was to assimilate the problems created by Communist cell activities in different areas and professions to problems of security when in many cases there was not the remotest connection with national security. To make matters worse some of the political Neanderthals of the time, failing to recognise that vigorous criticism and dissent are the very life blood of a free society, became suspicious of their expression in social, political and religious affairs because Communist propaganda exploited such criticisms and dissent for its own purposes.

TO BE SURE, there were problems of unprofessional conduct posed in some of the fields in which Communist Party cells operated. When such offences came to light it was not the business of government to intervene; it was the responsibility of the professionals in their own field to formulate and to enforce the appropriate standards of conduct. Their failure to do this, even when there was ample evidence of violation of principles of professional conduct, played into the hands of unscrupulous politicians. Where there was evidence, e.g., of membership in an organisation that issued instructions to its members to engage in unprofessional behaviour, the essential issues had little relevance to the Cold War or to national security.

Liberals were divided among themselves as to the significance of membership in the Communist Party. Long before the onset of the Cold War, the question had arisen in the area of education. The New School of Social Research was founded in 1919 by John Dewey, James Harvey Robinson, Thorstein Veblen, Charles Beard and Alvin Johnson, the leading liberal thinkers of the nation. In 1934 it organised a Graduate School staffed mainly by exiles from Nazi Germany. The faculty of the Graduate School adopted the following principles which subsequently became the position of the New School:

> "The New School knows that no man can teach well, nor should be permitted to teach at all, unless he is prepared 'to follow the truth of scholarship wherever it may lead.' No inquiry is ever made as to whether a lecturer's private views are conservative, liberal or radical; orthodox or agnostic; views of the aristocrat or commoner. Jealously safeguarding this precious principle, the New School stoutly affirms that a member of any political party or group which asserts the right to dictate in matters of science or scientific opinions is not free to teach the truth and thereby is disqualified as a teacher.
>
> "Equally, the New School holds that discrimination on grounds of race, religion or country of origin either among teachers or students runs counter to every profession of freedom and has no place in American education."

On the other hand, the attitude of the Communist Party of the USA mirrored at the time the position of the Communist Party of the USSR. Among the instructions to those of its members who were teachers, published in the official organ of the Communist Party (*The Communist*, May 1937), we find the following:

> "Party and YCL [Young Communist League] fractions set up within classes and departments must supplement and combat by means of discussion, brochures, etc. bourgeois omissions and distortions in the regular curriculum. . . . *Marxist Leninist analysis must be injected into every class.*
>
> "*Communist teachers must take advantage of their position without exposing themselves* to give their students to the best of their ability working-class education.
>
> "To enable the teachers in the party to do the latter, the party must take careful steps to see that all teacher comrades are given thorough education in the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. Only when teachers have really mastered Marxism-Leninism *will they be able skilfully to inject it into their teaching with the least risk of exposure* and at the same time conduct struggles around the schools in a truly Bolshevik manner."

The sentences I have italicised leave no doubt that there was an awareness that the actions recommended violated the norms of academic freedom and integrity. Nor can there be any question that members were expected to follow the Party line on all issues, for as one of the Resolutions of the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party put it: "In order to carry through their work effectively . . . all Communists must at all times take a position on

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every question that is in line with the policies of the party. . . ."

Caute is aware of the existence of these directives but ignores the issues and problems they raise. Without quoting them, he dismisses these directives as "dated" implying that they no longer hold for the period he is treating. He fails to indicate when they were officially, or even unofficially, withdrawn or modified or repudiated. This is typical of his approach in every area. There are no problems for him set by the existence of members of a Communist Leninist Party intent upon penetrating the educational and cultural institution of a democracy for purposes hostile to their proper functioning. Such an attitude is bound to provoke sooner or later a public reaction that threatens others besides Communists. More seriously, it creates an atmosphere in which the proper professional measures, under safeguards of due process, fail to be taken by the profession itself to remedy abuses.

Not surprisingly Caute is just as cavalier with the problem created by secret Communist cells in newspapers, especially when members of the Communist Party, queried about their party-angling of the news, invoked the Fifth Amendment on the ground that a truthful answer would tend to incriminate them. Some invoked the Fifth Amendment not in order to avoid incriminating *themselves*, but in order to avoid incriminating *others* which legally was an inadmissible ground. But how was one to know their real motivation? Caute denounces the *New York Times* and the local New York union of the American Newspaper Guild as well as the Guild membership of the *Times* for holding that in such circumstances the reliance on the Fifth Amendment created a doubt about the professional integrity of the newspaper reporter on whom the public relied for an honest news story.

> "The record of the *New York Times* throughout these years can be summarised in a sentence: sensitive to the rights and liberties of certifiable anti-Communist liberals, insensitive to the rights and liberties of the Left, of those who questioned the rectitude of the Truman Doctrine."

Caute is characteristically mistaken. The *New York Times* was sensitive to the rights and liberties of anti-Communist liberals who were being smeared or falsely accused of being Communists or subject to the discipline of the Communist Party. But, together with these liberals, it was also sensitive to the rights and liberties of those who questioned the rectitude of the Truman Doctrine as many pacifists and isolationists did. Once more Caute slyly uses that rubber-band term "Left" to conceal the fact that he means members of the Communist Party. (If by "Left" one includes belief in civil and human rights, the anti-Communist liberals whom he denigrates were more genuinely Left than those to whom Caute is referring.) It is beyond even Mr Caute's considerable powers of invention to cite a single case when anyone, Communist Party member or not, was denied by the government or courts any legitimate right or liberty merely for "questioning the rectitude of the Truman Doctrine."

CAUTE'S *parti-pris* and anti-American animus comes clearly into play even when he deals with some of the truly shameful excesses of the investigatory power in the entertainment industry. Given the nature of the Communist Party, there was a legitimate Congressional interest in discussing the sources of its funding. Hollywood during the 1930s and '40s provided huge sums of money for the coffers of the Communist Party and its front organisations. V. J. Jerome, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, was the Party representative who oversaw the raising of funds and the recruitment of members. The relevant facts could have been ascertained by an investigation of the financial resources of the Communist Party, not of the entertainment industry. The result of Congressional investigation was unfortunate. Many Hollywood and Broadway performers were victimised, some of whom had very little actual relationship with the Communist Party. Racketeers appeared on the scene who offered to "clear" those identified (or suspected) as members of the Communist Party for a fee. The heads of the California movie studios and Manhattan radio and television networks abdicated their own responsibilities and judgments and supinely accepted "black-lists" drawn up by pressure groups.

There were certain problems connected with the ethics of employment involved here which Caute refuses to recognise—some flowing from the record of activity and harassment by Communists against critics of Communism (touched on by John Cogley in his two-volume *Report on Blacklisting*), and some flowing from the fact that the entertainment industry was profit-oriented. There was nothing corresponding to the BBC or the Public Broadcasting System in the US at the time. The first set of problems could have been met by drawing up a code of professional behaviour to be administered by representatives of the producers and artists as well as the industry and public. Even a good unpolitical trade union could protect members from political victimisation. But such unions were lacking. The second was more difficult. There had always been a "morals clause" in the contracts signed with studios that released them from underwriting performers whose behaviour might give rise to a public boycott that would lead to

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economic loss to the studio. The "ratings" of audience reach have always been king in this industry. The courts in the main have upheld the validity of the "morals clause" and the justification for invoking it when individuals by their defiance of the Congressional Committees or their invocation of the Fifth Amendment became objects of popular scorn or hatred, and possible boycott. Even if the "right to a job" (or to unemployment insurance) is regarded as a human right, as it should be, it cannot be a right to a specific job. In a highly competitive market, the manufacturer who sponsors a show that features a talented performer who has endorsed, say, the Ku Klux Klan and the "Protocols of Zion" or any other unpopular cause, and consequently fears a boycott of his product that could bankrupt him, cannot be expected to continue subsidising the performer or show, particularly if he himself abominates the "cause" that has been espoused. This would by no means justify him in setting up a black-list. One might even respect the sponsor for refusing to yield to outside pressures regardless of its effect on his financial position. But one could not reasonably condemn him for insisting that the performer be dropped. Neither he nor his shareholders are in business for their health. Suppose the performer were not someone of Fascist sympathies but someone who had endorsed the Communist propaganda line that the USA had engaged in germ warfare in Korea, and a patriotic boycott by Americans had begun. Would refusal of sponsors to continue his employment be morally illegitimate? Even if one deplores the demonstrations of protest against performers on political grounds as unwise or unjustifiable, the legal right to peaceful protest must be protected just as much as the right to hold unpopular political opinions by the performers. Does this mean that performers must be protected from the economic consequences of their unpopularity?

IN AN ESSAY reviewing Cogley's study in which I criticise the black-list, I consider these and other problems in the ethics of employment. Mr Caute cites one sentence—and this only in part—from the essay to indicate the extremes to which "Cold War liberals" went in pressing for a domestic purge. He carefully refrains from citing the succeeding sentences that give my actual position. This is the sentence Caute quotes:

> "So long as the radio and television industries operate under commercial sponsorship, it is both unrealistic and unfair to compel sponsors whose income position is being undermined by popular boycott of Communist or Fascist performers on their programs to continue their sponsorship. . . ."

Standing by itself no reader could infer from this truncated sentence what my true position was. He would be inclined to believe that I endorsed the Hollywood purges and black-lists. That is why Caute cuts the quotation short. I must beg the indulgence of the reader for the lengthy passage I now cite as evidence of Caute's suppressions of what he finds inconvenient to his obsessive anti-anti-Communism. His procedure here is typical of his criticisms of some other leading "Cold-War liberals."

> "So long as the radio and television industries operate under commercial sponsorship, it is both unrealistic and unfair to compel sponsors whose income position is being undermined by a popular boycott of Communist or Fascist performers on their programs to continue their sponsorship, or to drop the show and thus harm other performers. Paradoxically, only a publicly-owned radio or television system, as in Great Britain, could withstand a popular boycott of entertainers who have outraged the conscience of the country. The Minister in charge, however, would have to answer for it in Parliament.
>
> "Under existing conditions of sponsorship no general theoretical solution is possible. It may be that with time and increasing sophistication, no matter what the politics of an entertainer, the audience will react to his talent and not to his prejudices. After all we laugh with Chaplin despite his politics, enjoy Picasso even though he is committed to communism, and listen with pleasure to Wagner without being upset by his virulent anti-Semitism. There is a kind of *Narrenfreiheit* customarily extended to artists which does not license them to violate the moral decencies but which makes for greater charity in judgment on the part of audiences. This in no way jeopardizes our right to criticize artists and our right not to listen. Where no position of executive trust is involved, it would be wiser as well as more generous, especially since no question of national security enters, to leave all careers open to talents subject to the criticism of audience response. In the entertainment industry no one can survive the audience's refusal to listen. Only the great are likely to escape the consequences of violations of basic community values. And when they do, we should forgive them their bizarre morals and politics, within the law, because of the joy they give us in enriching the human legacy.
>
> "At the moment the popular arts suffer more from low standards of taste and achievement than from threat of communist penetration. Problems flowing from the latter can best be solved by working out a code of ethical procedures *within* and for the industry. They are not a legitimate concern of any Congressional committee unless it can be shown that a definite issue of national

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security is involved. If it is true, as it once was true, that a large portion of the financial backing for the Communist Party comes from its Hollywood contingent and sympathizers, this is certainly a relevant question for investigation. But this could be more effectively accomplished not by an investigation of the entertainment industry but by an investigation of the financial resources of the Communist Party."

It is by selective quotations from passages like these that Caute forges his amalgam of anti-Communist liberals and Senator Joseph McCarthy as both guilty of "willingness to defend democracy by means of anti-democratic methods." Caute is not a Communist but his selective quotations are typical of Communist polemics. They bring to mind the attempt of an English Stalinist philosopher to prove that John Dewey, until his death the leading American anti-Communist liberal, was a racist.

CAUTE IS unreliable not only in his exposition of the views of those whom he condemns, but of the position of those whom he defends—especially those who have been active on the Communist firing line. One can pick at random almost any of the figures he selects as a victim of American persecution and find evidence of violent distortion in his account. The case of Cedric Belfrage can serve as well as any other. Belfrage is depicted by Caute as merely a Communist sympathiser harassed and persecuted by the government who sought to deport him—merely for his opinions. Belfrage (of British nationality) was a resident alien who served as an editor of the Communist *National Guardian*. He is cited as a case "which most forcefully demonstrated the government's refusal to tolerate criticism from the far Left" (*sic*). But in Belfrage's case it was not merely his criticism, which was standard Communist patter, that the government was concerned with; nor even the charge of Party membership. (His Party name was Oakden.) He had been publicly identified as a member of the British Intelligence Service who had been recruited by the Soviet Secret Police operating in the US, i.e. as actually a double-agent with basic loyalty to the Kremlin. When asked (on 5 May 1953), "Did you ever turn over extremely valuable information from the files of the British Intelligence Service while you were here in the United States of America to Russian agents?", he invoked the Fifth Amendment. At another crucial hearing (on 10 August 1954), he was asked; "Have you ever been engaged in espionage activities against the United States or Great Britain?" He again invoked the Fifth Amendment. A deportation warrant was then issued against him. As an alien, Belfrage enjoyed rights and privileges altogether unknown not only in democratic countries on the continent, but also in his native Britain. All one need ask is: what would be the fate of an alien in Britain who in similar circumstances refused to answer a question about his espionage activities? No one in the United States, whether in Belfrage's time or today, has the power of the UK Home Secretary to send an alien packing whose presence is regarded as harmful to the national interest. In the USA the government must present reasons at public hearings, and frequent and lengthy judicial appeals can be taken from the decision of the Commission of Immigration. (The activity of American Courts on the whole gives the lie to Caute's account of "great American fear.") Caute does not give the pertinent details about the Belfrage case.[4]

IT WAS ACTUALLY A FEW SUCH CASES of this kind that McCarthy demagogically exploited to gain the limited support of the American public for a brief period. The essence of McCarthyism was irresponsible exaggeration. Not everything he said was false. But he manipulated what was true to convey untruth. "Irresponsible exaggeration" is a precise characterisation of Caute's assertion that the United States was in the grip of terror during the so-called McCarthy years. Even at the height of Senator McCarthy's power the leading newspapers of the country were criticising, indeed denouncing, him. His methods, tactics and words were under impassioned attack in almost every large educational centre of the nation. There is little likelihood that there will be a recurrence of McCarthyism except in the improbable event that the Caute syndrome which mistakes dangerous conspirators for harmless heretics reappears in the thought and behaviour of the American administrative bureaucracy.

[4] Nor of the Gerhardt Eisler case or of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee. According to Caute the demand for the records of this organisation by the House Committee was motivated primarily by hostility to opponents of Franco. He omits mention of the fact that what preceded the investigation was the publication of the photostatic copies of the cheques issued by the Anti-Fascist Committee to Gerhardt Eisler, at that time serving as the chief Cominform agent in the US according to former leading Communists. Money raised for "the orphans and widows of anti-Fascist refugees" was being diverted, at least in part, to the support of the Communist Party functionaries. Caute applauds the refusal to submit the Communist records on the ground that the anonymity of the donor and recipients were at stake although the evidence could have been presented in executive session.

In this connection it is interesting to observe that when the director of Ku Klux Klan was sent to jail for contempt for refusing to produce Klan records of membership before a grand jury, he pleaded not only that he was bound by an oath of secrecy but that the revelation of the names of the Klansmen would be an act of betrayal and prejudicial to the interests of his fellow-members. None of those who protested at the conviction of Communist front organisations for refusal to submit their records of how they spent monies raised for non-political purposes protested.

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THE GRAVEST DOMESTIC DAMAGE of McCarthy and McCarthyism was its effect on government employees, especially Foreign Service officers who for a few years were intimidated into playing it safe in their analyses and recommendations out of fear of public inquisitorial grilling. McCarthy lost whatever public support he had when he overreached himself in his attack on the Army. His demagogy became apparent even to the relatively unsophisticated citizenry. As subsequent events have shown—despite a chorus of anguished predictions to the contrary—he has had absolutely no effect on the vigorous expression of political dissent.

In perspective, perhaps the greatest harm from McCarthyism to the USA and to the struggle for freedom was the distorted impression it produced on European public opinion concerning the nature and consequences of Congressional investigations. They were compared with the aid of a largely hostile European press to the terroristic practices of the *Gestapo* and the NKVD. Incredible as it may seem, during and long after McCarthy's years, I found many influential European intellectuals more concerned, certainly more vocal, about McCarthyism than about the Gulag Archipelago. Some of them actually compared the political situation in the United States in 1953 to that of the Weimar Republic in late 1932 when Hitler was in the wings ready to take over. Caute's book, despite his occasional disavowals of intent, tends to perpetuate these delirious political judgments.

FINALLY, it remains to ask: Why was it that there was so much more concern about the problem of Communist infiltration from 1950 on in the United States than in countries like Austria (which were partly occupied by Soviet troops) or in France and Italy (with their mass Communist Parties) or in Great Britain? This is a large question, and I have attempted to analyse it in detail elsewhere.[5] Briefly, the answer is this: in countries as vulnerable as Austria, there was hardly any need to worry about the problem because it would have made little difference if anyone did. In France and Italy to this day any attempt to break up the Communist underground organisations, which function like a state within a state, or effectively curb infiltration into strategic government services, would result in crippling strikes, if not civil war.

It should also be recalled that the Korean War, although fought under the aegis of the United Nations, was experienced (because of the losses incurred) primarily as an American engagement. At about this time the United States lost its monopoly of nuclear weapons. Rightly or wrongly, this was widely attributed to Communist espionage. Most important of all, in contradistinction to the situation in Great Britain publicly sworn testimony—some of it legally substantiated when the charges were contested and most of it met with Fifth Amendment evasions—had identified highly-placed government officials as members of the Communist underground. Communist penetration in Britain seems to have been limited to security and defence agencies. Had a comparable number of high-ranking persons in the exalted precincts of British officialdom been identified in the same way as their American counterparts, many of them in advisory and policy-making posts, popular concern would probably have mounted to the same degree. The structure of Westminster's party organisation and the Official Secrets Act would have prevented a demagogue from exploiting the situation. But there would surely have been a tighter security system, a deeper understanding of ideologically motivated subversion and espionage. I am sure too there would have been a greater scepticism of David Caute's belated reverse McCarthyism.

[5] See my *Political Power and Personal Freedom*, (1959), pp. 235–51, and my reply to Mr James Cameron in ENCOUNTER, February 1977, p. 90 ff.

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DOCUMENT

Isaac Deutscher's "Stalin"

An Unpublished Critique—By LEOPOLD LABEDZ

"The Moscow Trials, which so shocked the world, signify the death agony of Stalinism. A political régime constrained to use such methods is doomed. Depending upon external and internal circumstances, this agony may endure for a longer or shorter period of time. But no power in the world can any longer save Stalin and his system."

LEON TROTSKY, The Stalin School of Falsification *(1937)*

"The coming epoch may bring with it a breathtaking reversal of the process by which the Soviet democracy of the early days of revolution was transformed into an autocracy. . . . However half-hearted the intentions of the Malenkov government may have been and whatever its ultimate fate, it already has the historic distinction that it has taken the first steps which should lead towards democratic regeneration."

ISAAC DEUTSCHER, Russia after Stalin *(1953)*

"When Stalin's body was evicted from the Mausoleum on the Red Square . . . a prominent editor of a great bourgeois paper remarked wistfully: 'Now we may have to raise monuments to Stalin. Without Stalin the Soviet Union may indeed become so much more attractive to our working classes that we shall face dangers infinitely more real and threatening than those we had to face during his reign of terror'. . . ."

TAMARA DEUTSCHER, Détente & Socialist Democracy *(1975)*

THE 25th anniversary of Stalin's death has been dutifully marked in the "bourgeois" press and dutifully ignored in the Communist press. There were no surprises on either side. In the West the picture of Stalin has been subjected to a steady process of realistic exposure during this quarter of a century: from Khrushchev's "secret speech" to Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*. Various other influences contributed to this process: reminiscences by Milovan Djilas and Svetlana Stalin; books on Stalin's terror like those by Robert Conquest; Western studies of Soviet history, such as the biographies of Stalin by Adam Ulam or Ronald Hingley; writings by Soviet survivors of the Stalin epoch like Nadezhda Mandelshtam or dissidents like Andrei Sinyavsky. Five years before the fateful date, Orwell's fear in *1984* that humanity may be deprived of its memory through the manipulation of history is not really likely to materialise.

In the East the picture of Stalin has been subject to historiographical reappraisal of quite a different kind. Its outcome may have been the official silence on the anniversary, but none the less Stalin received sympathetic treatment in recently published memoirs by the Minister of Foreign Trade, Nikolai Patolichev; and the mention of Stalin's name by the Minister of Defence, Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, at the Army Day meeting in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses, brought a burst of applause from the 6,000 officers present.

None of the type of writings first mentioned has, of course, ever been published in the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders may not be able to implement completely Orwell's dictum that "He who controls the past, controls the future"; but they know that if they do not try, they will lose not only the future but the present as well.

READERS of Leo Labedz's remarkable first article on Isaac Deutscher ("Survey", April 1962) waited for years in vain for its sequel. But it never appeared. The author now explains why, and offers his original text with a new introduction as a contribution to the anniversary of Stalin's death.

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SOVIET HISTORIOGRAPHY remains the Eighth Wonder of the World. Bending the historical evidence did not begin with Stalin, though the surrealistic falsification of historical facts certainly reached "yawning heights" under him. But the "memory hole" technique certainly did not end with him and his treatment in Soviet history books under his successors is a vivid illustration of this. Under Stalin, as the late Bertram D. Wolfe put it:

> "Party historiography was in a steadily deepening crisis. Histories succeeded one another at a faster and faster rate, as if they were being consumed by a more and more irritable gigantic chain-smoker who lit the first page of each new work with the last page of the old. . . . The heroes of one work became the dubious weaklings of the next and the villains and traitors of the third; persons of one work became unpersons in the next . . . ." [1]

It was only the publication in 1938 of the celebrated "Bible of Stalin's era", *The Short Course on the History of the CPSU*, which stopped this particular "chain-smoking" for the next 15 years.

The first new Party history under Khrushchev (published in 1959) was only a pale shadow of his "secret speech." Stalin was of course dethroned, he had made "mistakes" and "violated Leninist norms of Party life", but apart from his mistaken idea about the sharpening of the class struggle during the "construction of socialism", there was no indication of his wrong doings. Even the murder of Kirov was given the (slightly attenuated) old Stalinist twist. Only in its second edition (published in 1962, a year after the 22nd "de-Stalinisation" Congress) was there a sharply different treatment of Stalin. It has not only dropped the wild panegyrics about him contained in the *Short Course*, but admits mass repressions under him during which "leading Party and Government officials and military men" had perished. It did not, of course, explain the nature of these repressions or provide a true picture of the scope of Stalin's Great Terror. But if the Moscow Trials remained taboo, Kirov's murder no longer was.

> "The assassination of Kirov had a most adverse effect on the life of the Party and the state. It was committed under the cult of personality. Stalin used it as a pretext for reprisals against persons unacceptable to him. Many arrests took place as a result. It was the beginning of wholesale repressions and flagrant violations of socialist legality." [2]

The announced investigation of the crime has never been concluded; but it was revealed later in *Pravda* (7 February 1964) that Kirov was a candidate of a group of Party leaders who planned to replace Stalin, thus suggesting a motive.

The same edition of the Party history rewrote (falsely) Stalin's role during the War and (less falsely) put the blame on him for the "excesses" of the forcible collectivisation.

UNDER BREZHNEV the process of denigration of Stalin has been reversed. The book by Alexander Nekrich (now at Harvard) revealing Stalin's responsibility for Soviet unpreparedness for the Nazi attack on 22 June 1941 was condemned and withdrawn. The attacks on the de-Stalinisers, the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial, the fulsome homage in *Pravda* (26 February 1966) to his henchman Zhdanov—all these worrying pointers induced several Soviet notables to make an appeal to Brezhnev against rehabilitating Stalin. But although there was no complete rehabilitation, his image was being restored; the "de-Stalinising" historians were attacked, references to repressions, arrests and deaths resulting from them disappeared from print, even phrases like "the Personality Cult" and "the Era of Errors and Distortions" have become unacceptable in spite of their euphemistic timidity.

In 1969 Stalin was described in *Kommunist* (No. 3) as "a prominent figure of the CPSU and the Soviet State" and "a fighter for the working class." An article in *Pravda* (21 December 1969) commemorating the 90th anniversary of his birth played down his defence blunders and moved in earnest towards restoring his name as a great War Leader. The three Brezhnev editions of the Party history (1969, 1971, 1976) made an increasingly radical break with the Khrushchevian 1962 version, and rewrote it quite thoroughly. Criticisms of Stalin were either left out or became paltry; the references to the collectivisation and the purges were discreetly reformulated (in the last two editions the Red Army purge in the '30s is no longer mentioned); credit is given to Stalin for his role in the War and he is praised as a "theoretician and great organiser." [3]

The Kirov episode has been gradually brought back to a slightly retouched *Short Course* variant. Instead of the Khrushchev innuendo implicating Stalin in the crime, it is now said to have reminded the Party and the Soviet people "once again of the

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[1] Bertram D. Wolfe, *An Ideology in Power* (1969), p. 296.

[2] *Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Moscow, 1962), p. 486. On Soviet Party historiography under Khrushchev see: John Keep, *Contemporary History in the Soviet Mirror*, London, 1962; on historiography under Brezhnev see: Kenneth A. Kerst, "CPSU History Re-Revised", *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1977.

[3] The late Marshal Vasilevsky explained in *Voenno-Istoricheskii Zhurnal* (No. 2, 1978) that "historical interests of our socialist motherland justify Stalin's policy to avoid providing Germany with the pretext for unleashing war. His fault was that he did not draw the line beyond which such a policy became not just unnecessary, but dangerous."

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need to increase revolutionary vigilance" (which is the old Stalinist watchword). And the 1976 edition has dropped altogether even the emasculated reference to "violations of socialist legality" after Kirov's assassination which was still being printed in the 1969 and 1971 editions.

In short, the picture of Stalin has been refurbished quite fundamentally under Brezhnev. While Khrushchev has become an "unperson", a "balanced" biography in the Soviet calendar for 1979 marks the 100th anniversary of Stalin's birth on 21 December.

It is against this background that one should read the accompanying essay. I wrote it at the end of 1962 at the height of Khrushchevian de-Stalinisation, shortly after the publication of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and of the second edition of Isaac Deutscher's biography of Stalin. I was fresh under the impact of *One Day* . . . and it was just at a time when I had persuaded an American publisher to produce an English translation of Solzhenitsyn's novel (for which Max Hayward and I provided an introduction). It was then that I wrote this essay on Deutscher. But it was never printed. I may perhaps be permitted to explain the circumstances.

My essay—reproduced below—is the second part of a study which I published in April 1962 in *Survey* (No. 41). It criticised quite sharply Deutscher's writings, mainly his journalism. At the end of it there was an announcement that there would be a continuation of the study which would deal with his historical works.

After the appearance of the first essay I received a letter from Mr Deutscher's solicitor threatening me with a libel suit and demanding an apology. I consulted several lawyers. After grilling me on the subject they advised me that there was no case to answer. Accordingly I refused to budge. Mr Deutscher, after a sharp exchange of correspondence, did not implement his threat and did not issue the threatened libel writ.

But when I had written the second part my lawyers advised me not to publish it. The publication of the second article might suggest "a deliberate campaign to destroy Deutscher's reputation." I could not understand this reasoning, in view of the fact that the first article already contained the advance announcement about the forthcoming publication of the second. But legal technicalities are beyond the comprehension of a mere layman; and it was impractical to try to straighten out the issue by a transatlantic correspondence. I was then a Senior Fellow at Columbia University in New York, and I had other things to do. So I postponed publication.

WHEN I EVENTUALLY RETURNED to London I was again busy with other matters. I harboured the idea of publishing it, but then Isaac Deutscher suddenly died (in Rome on 19 August 1967, at the age of 60) and I saw no point in engaging in posthumous polemics. I therefore put the article aside, and did not think about it until some 11 years later, when in a conversation the Editor of ENCOUNTER suggested to me the idea of publishing it at long last on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Stalin's death. I put together the pages of the original text with some difficulty, and it is reproduced here without updating (which I have tried to provide in this introduction) and with no changes whatsoever.

ALTHOUGH THE STALIN ERA and the Soviet epoch in general are by now no longer "a mystery wrapped in enigma" for the Western public, the ability and readiness to draw lessons from them are far from impressive. "Progressive" stereotypes and myths about the Soviet Union are no longer what they used to be, yet Western understanding of the Soviet phenomenon is not all that much better. This applies in particular to the question of the Soviet attitude to truth and facts.

Recently Boris N. Ponomarev headed (for the second time) the delegation of Soviet "parliamentarians" visiting the USA (he also had talks not long ago with the British Prime Minister, James Callaghan). In April 1978 he attended the Socialist International conference on disarmament in Helsinki. He lectured there on the "peaceful policy" of the Soviet Union.[4] He is the Party ideological spokesman on such matters as dissidents and Euro-Communism. Like the head of the KGB, Andropov, Ponomarev is concerned with disinformation (but, unlike Andropov, he is only a Candidate Member of the Politburo). He is the head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and as such officially in charge of Soviet relations with the foreign Communist parties. He is the embodiment of official Soviet double-think and double-talk. Whether his Western parliamentary or socialist "colleagues", who consider him an *interlocuteur*

[4] Cf. *Kommunist*, No. 7, May 1978, pp. 38–50. At the December 1962 meeting of Soviet historians Ponomarev used a quotation from Lenin to say that Party-mindedness requires historical analysis to be based on "a foundation of precise and indisputable facts." In a *Samizdat* historical review, *Pamyat* (reproduced by Chronicle Press, New York, 1978), L. Nadvoitsky demonstrates how the book published in 1974 by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, *Lenin: A Collection of Photographs and Movie Stills*, which allegedly includes "all" the photographic material on the subject "in existence", with the exception of 53 photographs—uses the old "memory hole" technique; eliminating the "unpersons" and systematically "masking out" from the photographs the unrehabilitated "enemies of the people" (Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, et al.). Some of these doctored photographs were reproduced in the article by Christopher Hitchens, "Mutilating Russia's photographic history", *New Statesman*, 1 September 1978.

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valable at *détente* parleys, realise all this or not, they are likely to be blissfully unaware of another title to glory of Mr Ponomarev. He is the Grand Vizier of Soviet historical falsification, a Talleyrand of Soviet historiography. He epitomises the Soviet customary perversion of truth and window-dressing in matters of the past as in matters of the present, and the two are inextricably linked.

He began his career by helping Vilgelm G. Knorin in writing a Party history in the 1920s. When, in the words of Bertram Wolfe, "histories, and a little later historians, were disappearing without trace", Knorin's work suffered the usual fate and he himself was shot afterwards as "a *Gestapo* agent." But that is not what happened to Boris Ponomarev. He flourished under Stalin (whom he probably helped, with Professor Yudin, in the preparation of the *Short Course*). He flourished under Khrushchev for whom he prepared the two versions of the "de-Stalinised" Party history. And he flourishes under Brezhnev for whom he revised it radically by producing the three new editions in which Stalin is partially rehabilitated. He is, in fact, the chief editor of all five divergent editions of the post-Stalin Party history! This is something even beyond George Orwell's imagination.

But should one really complain that too few learn from the past? One must remember that the intellectual *cognoscenti* "upstairs" influence the rank-and-file "downstairs." In May-June 1976, the *New Left Review*, on whose editors Isaac Deutscher was so seminal an influence, introduced a new editorial section, "Memories for the Future." It explained that

> "the Left—despite the importance it habitually attaches to the experience of this past [i.e. of the 1920s and '30s]— . . . has too often neglected this precious and dwindling inheritance of memory. At best, it has concentrated exclusively upon the great names—and erratically at that. Of course, the account given by major participants, in memoirs or interviews, can be invaluable. But the testimony of less central figures is often equally illuminating—and may at times even be more reliable."

To make up for it, the *New Left Review* published extracts from David Wilson's autobiography *Living in My Time*. The memoir of this "ordinary Labour man" is indeed illuminating, but perhaps not in the way intended by the *New Left Review*.

In it, Wilson describes his encounter with Prince Dmitri Svatopelk-Mirsky, who had fought with the Whites against the Soviets, became a refugee and taught Russian Language and Literature at London University. Their encounter was a turning point for Mr Wilson (who eventually joined the Communist Party), and he eloquently expresses his gratitude to Prince Mirsky:

> "He had come to accept the rightness of the revolution for the Russian people and wished to help the Soviets in any way he could.
>
> On Sunday morning we had a long walk and, for me, an interesting discussion. He asked me how I saw the political situation, and in course of this I told him of the dread I had of the power of the press to mould the minds of people and to create opinion. He said 'Oh yes, of course, Bourgeois opinion' and seemed puzzled at my fears. It was quite extraordinary that at that moment it was as though the scales dropped from my eyes. Until that very moment I had always thought that the capitalist press could create working-class opinion, and the thought had obsessed and frightened me. And here was this Russian aristocrat for whom it was simply an observed fact that the English bourgeois press could instil bourgeois opinion into the British proletariat; but of course they could not create proletarian opinion. It seemed quite simple to him. Since then I have read with profit everything that I have been able to get by Mirsky in English. He eventually went back to Russia, and what became of him I do not know, but I owe him a step in my mental development."

The subsequent fate of Prince Mirsky is, of course, well known. He did not enjoy for long the truthful proletarian features of the Soviet press.[5] He was arrested during the Great Purge and with countless others—an aristocrat among the people—perished in the Gulag Archipelago of Stalin's forced labour camps. So much for the *New Left Review*'s history lessons for those who want to use memories for the future!

IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL *Chronicles of Wasted Time* (1973), Malcolm Muggeridge recollected Prince Mirsky in Moscow:

> "Mirsky never discussed with me how he felt about having returned to the USSR as a Soviet citizen. It was obviously an act of great imprudence, and it was clear that he disliked living in Moscow, and having to associate with other Soviet penmen. In London his position had been quite comfortable; as a crossed-out prince he had an assured social position both in upper-class and intelligentsia circles, besides being welcome at working-class gatherings. Even—perhaps particularly—the Communists were glad to have a prince with them on the plinth in Trafalgar Square when they assembled there. In Moscow he was completely at the mercy of the authorities. I don't, of course, know whether he

[5] Shortly after the *New Left Review* printed Mr Wilson's piece of autobiographical wisdom, the *Journalist*, the organ of the National Union of Journalists published (in August 1976) an article by Alice Barstow, "The Soviet Press—A Weapon of Democracy". It elicited a vigorous protest in its correspondence columns.

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ever meditated trying to escape, but once, when we happened to be looking at a map together, his finger moved to Batum, on the Turkish frontier, and stayed there. I never heard for certain what happened to him, but know that he was arrested and taken off, either to be executed or to die in a labour camp. The ostensible cause of his fall from favour was, it seems, an article he had written on the occasion of the centenary of Pushkin's death in 1937. Following what he supposed to be the Party Line, he wrote of Pushkin as a court lackey and toady. Alas for him, the Line had changed, and Pushkin had been reinstated as a national hero. So, it turned out, Mirsky was liquidated for denigrating Pushkin—a delectable example of Fearful Symmetry, whose cruel whimsicality may have appealed to his own savage temperament. When I heard how his fall had come about, I recalled Luciani's [*Le Temps* correspondent] remark about him [that Mirsky had pulled off the unusual feat of managing to be a parasite under three régimes—as a prince under Tsarism, as a professor under Capitalism, and as an *homme-de-lettres* under Communism]; of his three essays in parasitism, it was the last that had proved the most hazardous and exacting. . . . "

ONE OF MY OWN personal reminiscences throws an even sharper light on the relation between the Communist historical and mental development.

In 1940 I became friendly with the Soviet film-maker Alexei Kapler. He wrote scripts for some films in a series of movies which presented the history of the Revolution and of the Civil War according to the historiography of Stalin's *Short Course*. Among them were such films as *Lenin in October, Man with Arms, Lenin in 1918, The Unforgettable 1919*, etc. Stalin discussed Kapler's scripts with him personally. Kapler was perfectly aware that the *Short Course* was a concoction of lies, historical fabrications, and surrealistic distortions; but, needless to say, he did what Stalin "suggested" to him. In our own conversations he was quite cynical about it. His was not a case of "double-think"; he was conscious of the falsification of history involved in his work. But when I met him some twenty-five years later in London he was in some respects a changed man. He retained his pleasant qualities and warm personality. But what had happened to his cynicism, or scepticism, or critical awareness?

His personal history might have accounted for his rather unusual evolution. He had received prizes and privileges from Stalin for his work, but he was sent in 1943 to the Vorkuta concentration camp—because of his romance with Stalin's daughter, Svetlana. He spent more than 11 years in the Gulag Archipelago and was "rehabilitated" after Stalin's death. When I saw him again, in 1965,[6] he stressed his political loyalism, and he implored me "not to write slanders about the Soviet Union."

Some twelve years later, during a visit to Shanghai, I noticed that a local Chinese cinema was showing a Soviet film. A member of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee who was accompanying me explained that it was the 60th anniversary of the "October Revolution" and China had decided to commemorate it by showing in all the cinemas ten Soviet feature films on early Soviet history. They included *Lenin in October, Man With Arms, Lenin in 1918, The Unforgettable 1919*, etc. This, he explained to me, was being done because these films were banned in the Soviet Union. So it was urgent to prevent the falsification of history by Soviet "revisionists" who refused to show the true picture of the Soviet past. He obviously believed it. I felt that the ghosts of Kafka and Pirandello in a surrealistic embrace had been hovering over the scene.

WE LIVE IN AN AGE of polycentric surrealism. When Paul Neuberg, the producer of the 1978 British TV series "Stalin—the Red Tsar", was searching for copies of *Lenin in October, Lenin in 1918*, and *The Unforgettable 1919*, he discovered to his surprise that all the copies of these faked "documentary" films had actually been re-faked, and the new versions could therefore not provide relevant material. As *The Guardian* (12 August) reported:

> "He found versions in Paris, Brussels and Stockholm, as well as in London. But all versions had been censored in the 1960s to remove references to Stalin. Mr Neuberg claims that there are now no original prints with any public archive or distributor in the West. He had been obliged to go to private sources for a complete print.
>
> He was first alerted to the censoring last summer in a British film archive while viewing *Lenin in 1918*. He knew the original version featured Stalin prominently.
>
> 'The chief purpose of this film was to portray Stalin in the role of Lenin's right-hand man in the period of revolution and the Civil War. You can imagine our amazement when, by the end of reel three, it was clear he had been entirely cut.'
>
> *Lenin in October* contained a scene of actors portraying Lenin and Stalin walking through a crowded hall and on to a platform. The Stalin

[6] Svetlana, with whom I was in touch at the time, excluded (when she came to the West somewhat earlier) a number of references to Kapler from her book. But Kapler did not know of this act of reticence on her part until the book was published later. His own behaviour was personally decent. For instance, as eye-witnesses testify, he went out of his way to help his fellow prisoners in the Vorkuta prison camp (cf. Antoni Ekart, *Vanished Without Trace*, London, 1954).

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character had been excised from the scenes—but since the actor could not be removed from the platform without losing a vital scene, the film had been re-processed to put the figure of a sailor between the camera and the platform, blocking out the actor playing Stalin.

According to Mr Neuberg, the censoring was easy enough to execute, as none of the Western archives or distributors held master prints or negatives of the films, only prints. When the prints began to deteriorate, the Russians offered new versions."

In 1954, after the fall of Beria, the subscribers to the *Large Soviet Encyclopedia* received from its publishers an instruction recommending that they should replace, "using scissors and glue", an entry on Beria by an entry on the Behring Straits, conveniently provided on a newly-printed page. Even though, as in the case of Beria, the purpose of the film-erasures was falsification, the new rearrangement of reality actually happened to involve a removal of an historical fraud and not just a creation of an "unperson."

BUT WHAT CAN ONE MAKE of a prominent English historian whose mind is still so much in the grip of the mythical stereotypes formed in Stalin's time that they condition his perception even today? For A. J. P. Taylor, the bogey of a "Riga correspondent" sending his anti-Soviet false dispatches about the situation in Russia to the "bourgeois press" is still luridly alive. In the *New Statesman* (12 February 1978), Professor Taylor wrote the following about some BBC-TV programmes on China:

> "I remark from the BBC series that correspondents in Hong Kong are as qualified to judge China as those in Riga were qualified to judge Russia in the inter-war years."

Yet again, Muggeridge's memoirs are apt:

> "... at that time the paper [*The Times*] had no correspondent in Moscow and relied on the reports of a man named Urch in Riga. Anyone who had the curiosity to look up Urch's dispatches would find that they maintained a high level of accuracy and reliability; certainly by comparison with [Walter] Duranty's, so prominently displayed in the columns of the *New York Times*. Again one marvels at the almost mystical importance attached to the location of a newsgatherer as distinct from the truthfulness of the news sent."
>
> "... if the *New York Times* went on all those years giving great prominence to Duranty's messages, building him and them up when they were so evidently nonsensically untrue, to the point that he came to be accepted as the great Russian expert in America, and played a major part in shaping President Roosevelt's policies *vis-à-vis* the USSR—this was not, we may be sure, because the [NY] *Times* was deceived. Rather, because it wanted to be so deceived, and Duranty provided the requisite deception material. Since his time, there have been a whole succession of others fulfilling the same role—in Cuba, in Vietnam, in Latin America."

Evidently neither Khrushchev's "secret speech" nor Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* made any difference to A. J. P. Taylor's mind-set. Evidently, if you were a "correspondent in Riga" you told lies—even if history subsequently proved that honourable journalists had been reporting facts and truths.

Professor Adam Ulam once wrote:[7]

> "We who study Soviet affairs have—why try to conceal it—a skeleton in our filing cabinets. To describe this skeleton let me invoke a fictitious case of two fictitious characters, *X* and *Y*. In his attempt to learn as much as possible about the Soviet Union, *X*, between roughly 1930 and 1950, read nothing but the works of reputable, non-communist authors. He grounded himself on the writings of the Webbs and Sir John Maynard. Turning to the American academicians, he followed the studies of the Soviet government,

[7] *Survey*, No. 50, January 1964.

[8] A. J. P. Taylor approvingly reviewed in the *New Statesman* (13 January 1978) the book *Shattered Peace* (André Deutsch, 1978) by the young American historian Daniel Yergin, for whom what he calls "the Riga axioms" (i.e. the "counter-revolutionary" image of the Soviet Union) are the basis of his indictment of post-war American foreign policy. Thus the old stereotype is perpetrated by the new generation of "progressives." Ironically, A. J. P. Taylor's *idèe fixe* does not save him from abuse by other Old Believers in the myth about the "Riga correspondents." Reviewing Taylor's *Introduction* to the Penguin edition of John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*, Andrew Rothstein dismissed it in the Communist *Morning Star* (11 April 1977) as "14 pages of misinformation."

[9] After his release from the Mexican prison, Ramon Mercader received a high decoration in the Soviet Union. It was recently reported that he died in Cuba, but *Der Spiegel* claimed that he is "still alive and living in Moscow".

The case of Bukharin has been raised by the Communist Party historian, Paolo Spriano, who wrote in *l'Unita* (16 June 1978) that there was "a sacrosanct necessity" to rehabilitate the victims of the Moscow trials, after the son of Bukharin, Yuri, wrote a letter to Berlinguer appealing to him to intervene on behalf of his father's honour (it was published in *La Republica* on 22 June 1978, in English in *The New York Times* on 7 July 1978 and in *Tribune* on 14 July 1978). The Italian communist senator Umberto Terracini addressed the Italian, French, Spanish and English Communist Parties with a plea that they should declare the Moscow 1938 trial of Bukharin a case of "simple assassination", and called for the rehabilitation of Bukharin. The appeal was also made by several other West European communists and left figures (including the British Communist Party industrial organiser, Mick Costello).

These various appeals were initiated by The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (cf. Ken Coates, *The Case of*

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law, and various aspects of Soviet society which might have come from the pen of a professor at Chicago, Harvard, Columbia or Williams. This serious intellectual fare would be supplemented by the reading of the most objective non-academic experts on Russia, and finally of those few journalists who had no axe to grind, especially the ones who had spent a long time in the Soviet Union.

His friend *Y* had an equal ambition to learn, but his taste ran to the non-scholarly and melodramatic. Indifferent to objectivity, he would seek the key to Soviet politics in the writings of the avowed enemies of the régime, like the ex-Mensheviks; he would delight in the fictional account *à la* Koestler or Victor Serge. Sinking lower, *Y* would pursue trashy or sensational stories of the 'I was a Prisoner of the Red Terror' variety. He would infuriate *X* by insisting that there were aspects of Soviet politics which are more easily understood by studying the struggle between Al Capone and Dan Torrio than the one between Lenin and Martov, or the dispute about 'socialism in one country.'

Which of our fictitious characters would have been in a better position to understand the nature of Soviet politics under Stalin?"

Alas, true characters are stranger than fictitious ones. A. J. P. Taylor still has not learned who was telling the truth—for even now he implies that the reports of the "Riga correspondents" about Stalin's murderous reign were just anti-Soviet slander.[8]

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY of Stalin's death provided a focus on the problems involved in all the esoteric points of historical interpretation. Our Western public still does not fully realise that the vicissitudes of Communist historiography are concerned with vital Party concerns, with its current policies and legitimacy, and that ultimately they bear upon its ideological identity and its attitude to reality itself. That is why a critique of the interpretation of the significance of the Stalin era and the highlighting of the events in it which have proved to be particularly sensitive for Communist historiography are important. My essay on Isaac Deutscher is, I trust, not at all an exercise in pedantry. It retains, I believe, contemporary relevance, particularly as Deutscher's book still exercises a considerable influence on the readers who may not have "heightened consciousness"—this applies especially to the New Left generation. Many of its "true believers" reacted to Deutscher in the same way as David Wilson did when "the scales dropped" from his eyes on encountering Prince Mirsky and his writings. Like Deutscher himself, they are "critically" sympathetic to both Trotsky and Stalin. They do not realise how trapped they are in a no-man's-land between Soviet historiography and Deutscher's hagiography.

In *The Prophet Outcast* (which will be the subject of a future essay), Deutscher quotes approvingly Trotsky's prediction that the monuments which Stalin had built himself

> "will be pulled down or taken into museums and placed there in chambers of totalitarian horrors. And the victorious working class will revise all the trials, public and secret, and will erect monuments to the unfortunate victims of Stalinist villainy and infamy on the squares of a liberated Soviet Russia."

This is, to be sure, strong language. Deutscher himself did not use it in his biography of Stalin (only after his death did he introduce "the Borgia perspective"). But *no* monuments were erected to Stalin's victims during the 25 years since the demise of the old tyrant. That anniversary coincided with the 40th anniversary of the Bukharin trial (which took place between 2 and 13 March 1938 and which was completely disregarded not only in the Soviet but, with one or two exceptions, such as the Italian liberal daily *Il Giornale* and the Communist *l'Unita*, also in the Western press). In the Soviet Union Nikolai Bukharin has not been rehabilitated. Nor of course has Leon Trotsky. Instead of monuments to his glory, the victim of Stalin's assassin[9] in Mexico has been

Nikolai Bukharin, 1978). According to Zhores Medvedev, it was Maurice Thorez who persuaded Khrushchev not to rehabilitate Bukharin. This seems unlikely; but whatever the case, the position of the PCF on the problem of rehabilitation of the victims of the Moscow Trials and Stalin's terror, although not as explicit as that of the PCI, has been implicitly modified. For instance, on 26–27 July 1978, *l'Humanité* published extracts from the memoirs of the Mexican Communist Valentin Campa about Trotsky's assassination which squarely put the blame for it on Moscow. On 4 September 1978 François Cohen, the editor of *La Nouvelle Critique, referred in l'Humanité* to Trotsky and Bukharin as "important personalities who have not yet been rehabilitated in the USSR." On 28 November 1978 *l'Humanité* demanded the rehabilitation of Bukharin.

On 15 August 1978 the official Communist daily, the *Morning Star*, published an article by Dennis Ogden, "Duty to the Truth about Bukharin", which made the unprecedented admission that the

> "three great 'purge trials'... were the public manifestations of a wave of mass repressions which sent millions from every walk of Soviet society to death of the labour camps... [Thus, unlike Deutscher, the communist paper came to acknowledge the historical magnitude of the Stalinist genocide by referring to millions, and not just thousands, of its victims—L.L.] Many of the victims of the purges... remain in the shadows. One of the most prominent of these is Bukharin. Like that of Trotsky, his role in Soviet history is misrepresented or ignored in Soviet publications."

In the meantime, Soviet historians continued to denounce "Trotskyite falsifications of history" and some of them still extolled the *Short Course*, in which, they say, "the principled evaluation by Stalin of the sabotage by the Trotskyites in the field of the history of the Party and of the October Revolution had important political significance" (N. N. Maslov and Z. V. Stepanov, *Ocherki Istochnikovedeniya i Istoriografii Istorii KPSS*, Leningrad, 1974).

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given a treatment which reaches even more absurd lengths than Stalin's own *Short Course*.

IN THE SECOND VOLUME of his novel *The Eternal Appeal* (1978) the Soviet author Anatoli Ivanov now claims that it was Trotsky who instigated the Great Purge in the 1930s. Together with his Gestapo masters, he manipulated the honest Chekists who were murdering innocent Communists and other Soviet citizens. It was Trotsky who prepared the demonic plan: "We will physically annihilate people who are most loyal to Soviet ideology . . . in all walks of life."

According to Ivanov, Trotskyism presented a terrible threat. The Soviet Union was only saved from its menace (of which the Great Purge was evidently only a foretaste) by the indomitable Stalin.

The novel was published in the mass-circulation *Roman-Gazeta* (No. 2, 1978) as well as in book form (first printing: 1,600,000 copies).

But if the rehabilitation of Deutscher's hero, Trotsky, has not occurred in the East, the first biographer of his anti-hero, Stalin, has been "rehabilitated" in the West. Boris Souvarine's classic book on Stalin has been re-issued in France 40 years after its original appearance and, as François Bondy described in ENCOUNTER (February 1978), has received deserved praise in the French press, including *Le Monde, Le Nouvel Observateur* and other "progressive" journals who ignored him disdainfully for close to half a century. Now suddenly it appears that he was right all along. He is hailed as a pioneer of "the whole demythification process" (as Sam White put it in the *Evening Standard*).

For Deutscher in his historical dialectics Stalin and Trotsky were, somehow, *both* right. In fact he himself was profoundly wrong about both antagonists. It was Souvarine who was right in his perspective on Stalin. But Deutscher dismissed Souvarine in a contemptuous reference, writing that Trotsky

> "preserved in his prose—as one preserves insects in amber—the names of quite a few scribblers who would otherwise be forgotten . . .".

Am I, in publishing my old essay, preserving the name of a "scribbler" who is being forgotten? Or should I have left my own pages "in amber"? Let the reader decide.

"One must be careful to avoid stirring up feelings when talking of the Revolution; no one was in a position to resist it. The blame lies neither with those who perished, nor with those who survived. It was not within the power of the individual to change the elemental forces and to prevent the course of events which were born from the situation and the circumstances."
NAPOLEON (1808)

The real adepts put on the mask of impartiality.
JULIEN BENDA, on historians, in *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (1928)

TEN YEARS AFTER Stalin's death his role in history is being rewritten in the Soviet Union. Not only has his body been removed from the mausoleum, his pictures withdrawn, his monuments destroyed, and his name erased from enterprises and places; the new edition of the Party history[10] has shifted from a regretful to a generally hostile attitude towards him. In the circumstances, Mr Deutscher's political biography of Stalin[11] looks like the only remaining and the most persuasive historical justification for the actions of his hero.

It is therefore somewhat ironical that while the "heirs of Stalin" are taken to task in *Pravda*, his Western biographer seems to repeat after Horace: *"Exegi monumentum aere perennius (I have erected a monument more durable than bronze)."* In the recent new edition of his book,[12] Mr Deutscher declares that he was always confident that his interpretation of Stalin and Stalinism would stand the test of time, and that although "a great deal of fresh documentation has become available" since the first edition, "on the whole I *do* stand by the interpretation of Stalin and Stalinism given here."

As a prophet Deutscher claimed: "Far from refuting my prognostications, events have confirmed them."[13] As a historian he echoes the sentiment: "This new documentation, however, far from contradicting the story as I have told it, amply confirms it." Thus, whether about the future or about the past, Deutscher "is always right" and the subsequent evidence only seals the verdict. A historian is less exposed than a prophet because he does not have to anticipate the facts, but only to reconstruct and select them. In his interpretation, however, he can fit them into a predetermined pattern in which the past is as inevitable as the future. In such a scheme evidence, old or new, is of limited relevance only and serves as an illustration for a *roman à thèse*.

[10] *Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskovo Soyuza*, Izdanie Vtoroe (Moscow, 1962).
[11] I. Deutscher, *Stalin, A Political Biography* (Oxford University Press, 1949).
[12] I. Deutscher, *Stalin, A Political Biography*, (Vintage Russian Library, 1960). All quotations unless otherwise indicated are from this edition.
[13] Cf. *Survey* (No. 41, April 1962), p. 129.

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For this he does not need any new illustrations, particularly such as could introduce a jarring note into the old text. The facts for which the late dictator is now being condemned are not exactly new to him. He did not have to wait for the Smolensk archives, and certainly not for the new Soviet Stalinography, to learn about them. At the time of his writing there was in the West an abundant literature on the subject. Since then it has grown still further and is now coming to the surface in the Soviet Union itself; but Mr Deutscher shows little inclination to elaborate upon this aspect of Stalin's reign.

A reader of *Stalin* would look there in vain for more than a cursory reference to such an historic Stalinist institution as the forced labour camps. In Deutscher's "historical perspective" the fate of the millions rotting in them deserved no more than a few sentences in a 600-page book. Now that a Soviet author has published a story in *Novy Mir* [1962] describing it in detail, the contrast with the attitude of our free historian is particularly telling. And Deutscher's treatment of the subject is not only extraordinarily brief, but also hazy and misleading.

He does not refer to the development of the Stalinist *univers concentrationnaire* during the two decades preceding the publication of his book. He reduces it there to two instances only: forced labour "imposed on peasants who had resorted to violence in resisting collectivisation", and the deportations in the spring of 1935, after the assassination of Kirov, of "tens of thousands of suspect Bolsheviks, Komsomoltsy, and their families" from Leningrad and other cities who "filled prisons and concentration camps." A reader unfamiliar with the subject would hardly suspect that it was not only the peasants "who had resorted to violence" who were deported to the North, that apart from them and the "suspect Bolsheviks, Komsomoltsy, and their families" there were millions (not thousands) of the inmates of the forced labour camps who did not belong to these categories. However, although both time and magnitude of the grim NKVD empire are blurred, "objectivity" is carefully preserved:

> "Soviet penitentiary reforms of earlier years, inspired by humanitarian motives, viewed the imprisonment of criminals as a means to their re-education, not punishment. . . . Amid the famine and misery of the early thirties the provisions for their protection were completely disregarded. "re-education" degenerated into slave labour, terribly wasteful of human life, a vast black spot on the picture of the second revolution."

This is all Deutscher has to say about Stalin's prison camps. He contrasts the "humanitarian" penal practice under Dzerzhinsky and Menzhinsky with its "degeneration" under Yagoda, and attributes it to the famine of the early 'thirties, without mentioning that this famine was caused by Stalin's own forcible collectivisation. And although later the conditions of the camp inmates had not improved, even though the famine had passed, and the camps became an important part of the Stalinist system there is nothing more on the subject in Deutscher's book.

He completely glosses over subsequent mass deportations, which included entire nationalities, and which were swelling the prison camps long after the "second revolution." For those deriving their information about Stalin's deeds from this biographer, some of the post-Stalin rehabilitations must be rather unexpected, as so many of his victims were not even mentioned by Deutscher. It would also be impossible to realise from this source the inhumanity of the camps when Beria (Deutscher's future "liberal") was in charge, described so vividly, though with restraint, in Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.*

Ironically enough, its author began his sentence before Deutscher's story ends. It was in 1949, while Solzhenitsyn was involuntarily "collecting material" in the camp for his novel, that the biography of his gaoler who "undertook to drive barbarism out of Russian by barbarous means" appeared. Its easy formulations and flying phrases appealed not only to the prejudiced and the unwary, but also to many people of good will who mistook its special pleading for objectivity. It has also evoked, as Deutscher notes, a "passionate resentment and hostility." This he deplores. But it is more clear than ever before that his book not only undermined resistance to Stalinism, but through its main thesis was in effect, even if not in intention, reassuring Stalin that, being an agent of history, he was on the whole doing only the historically inevitable in using forced labour in the process of industrialising Russia. And, being a chosen instrument of history, he did not have too many scruples about the means used: Djilas testifies in his *Conversations with Stalin* [1952] that cruelties "did not worry him one bit, for he was convinced that he was executing the judgment of history."

In this last respect, in fact, Stalin shared his biographer's view, and although he needed no reassurance, it must have been pleasant to have his actions presented as the verdict of history by an "objective historian" who also believed that *die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.* He had a job to do, given to him by history itself, and, unlike his biographer, he could not afford to be squeamish about it.

If it was too early for the tribunal of history, whose "judgment" was still uncertain, the roles were already indicated. The despot was "progressive" and the historian not only disinclined to be a "hanging judge", but in effect quite ready to overlook a good deal of the existing evidence in his

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assessment of the case. However, the victim had not yet been admitted to the witness stand, and, as could have easily been predicted, he was less interested than Deutscher in the "historical perspective", shaped as it was by the disembodied abstractions of a teleological theory, rather than by the real fate of flesh-and-blood humanity. Solzhenitsyn, the witness, was concerned with Ivan Denisovich, who had suffered in the camps. Deutscher, the historian, had his perspective in common with Yosif Vissarionovich, who had created them.

LEV TOLSTOY noticed that with the passage of time everything in the past begins to seem inevitable. This "deterministic effect" clashes with the realisation of choices—political, social, existentialist—with which we are faced in our actions before they are taken. The paradox is heightened when a deterministic theory of history is linked with a call to action. In so far as the theory is influencing its field of perception, it becomes a self-fulfilling or a self-destroying prophecy.

But it is still confronted with historical facts which do not correspond to its expectations. Faced with this, Marxist historians who have to interpret them can even declare such facts irrelevant to the basic propositions of Marxism. Deutscher, for instance, says:[14]

> "I cannot see the importance for the validity, or otherwise, of the materialist dialectic and of historical materialism of the fact that the development of the class struggle in the West has not confirmed some of the optimistic expectations of Marx, Engels, or Lenin."

But a much more important role in Deutscher's method of argumentation is played by the "deterministic effect" in the perception of history. Falling back upon it he introduces his "historical perspective", which he uses as a mask for political evaluation. He created it synthetically when Stalin was still alive, and when, as he himself puts it in the new edition of his book, "we had none." At that time the outcome of the political battles being fought was still in the balance, events were decided on a day-to-day basis, and evaluated by contemporary actors, but Deutscher already knew that "Stalin belongs to the breed of the great revolutionary despots, to which Cromwell, Robespierre, and Napoleon belonged."

This was rather flattering to Stalin, as none of these historical figures, whatever their misdeeds, engaged in systematic genocide. Cromwell had his Ireland, Robespierre his Madame Guillotine, and Napoleon his Duc d'Enghien, but none of them was associated with crimes of an order and magnitude comparable to Stalin's. None of them resembles the man who was responsible for the Grand Guignol of the Moscow Trials, the horrors of the *Yezhovshchina*, the mass deportations, starvation, the death of the anonymous millions who perished in all these Vorkutas and Kolymas, the death sentences on children, the execution of prisoners of war in Katyn, and the innumerable other crimes committed on his account. To use Deutscher's language, to give "full value" to his work, "history" has quite a lot more to "cleanse" after Stalin than it had after Cromwell and Napoleon.

But whatever theoretical construction one puts on it, barbarism is barbarism, and history is not a detergent. The "full value" of Stalin's work is not much appreciated nowadays, Deutscher washes whiter than Clio allows. His anthropomorphic language only obscures the realisation that "history" cannot "cleanse" anything. Stalin's victims are in their graves, millions of them unknown, and they cannot be raised from the dead. And a moral restitution involves not a historical apologia, but an unequivocal condemnation.

BOTH THE Khrushchevian and Deutscherian interpretations of Soviet history admit Stalin's merits. Deutscher, of course, demands a full rehabilitation of the communist opposition, and Khrushchev has not done this. But, on the other hand, since the 22nd Congress, Soviet pronouncements on Stalin are already more damning than Deutscher's own.

In Soviet historiography "progress" is attributed to the party and Stalin is said to have "seriously hampered it."[15] Deutscher "dialectically" related his "retrograde" and his "progressive" features and is acclaimed for his "objectivity" in the "bourgeois press."

But the difference between the two versions of history is not just one of focus, it is also one of the degree of blame put on Stalin. Deutscher is more inclined to put the blame on "History." It is therefore not surprising that, having prematurely identified his own perspective with the "historical perspective", and his own political verdict with the "verdict of history", he should declare in the introduction to the new edition of *Stalin* that "the historical perspective in which we can now view Stalin is perhaps still too short."

It is indeed not entirely unrealistic to imagine that, when the anti-Stalin campaign no longer serves a politically advantageous purpose, when the cries of the victims have lost their immediacy, and the next generation of party bureaucrats is no longer personally involved in Stalin's crimes, the time may come for his rehabilitation, for a measured assessment of his contribution to the might of the Soviet state. Should such a situation ever arise, Deutscher's biography of Stalin, with its

[14] *Nuovi Argomenti* (No. 57/58, 1962), p. 64.

[15] *Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskovo Soyuza* (Izdanie Vtoroye), p. 505.

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"bourgeois objectivism", will be on hand and could easily be used for such a revaluation. The Tolstoyan "deterministic effect" will by then really come into its own, the passage of time may blunt indignation and make the crimes appear inevitable or statesmanlike. No generation is really very much concerned with the horrors of the past; and although they are registered in the memory of humanity, they are not comparable with the horrors of the present. We all look at St Bartholomew's Day and the Smyrna atrocities with a much greater degree of detachment than did their contemporaries.

But if Deutscher's book may serve for Stalin's rehabilitation in the future, just as it served as an adroit apologia in the past, its philosophy of history may not be entirely adequate for that future purpose. Because, if it should ever happen, it will be more influenced by Russian patriotic attitudes, which are alien to the "internationalist" Deutscher, than by the abstractions of revolutionary theory applied by a member of that almost extinct species, the cosmopolitan Jewish intelligentsia. With the advent of communist polycentrism, the historical parallels are more likely to be again figures from the Russian past, Ivans and Peters, rather than Deutscher's Cromwells and Robespierres.

It is a melancholy thought, however, that, whether the omelette is national or international, the broken eggs will not necessarily loom large. There may be something in Deutscher's "historical perspective": Genghis Khan is, after all, a national hero of modern Mongolia.

THE selection and presentation of historical facts should, in Deutscher's frequently used phrase, be made *sine ira et studio*, but this lofty prescription is not followed in his historical writings.

A historian need not be impartial to be objective, but to qualify as such he must fulfil certain demands. He must use all sources and not disregard those which do not happen to fit his preconceived ideas. He must keep his bias within reasonable limits and in selecting his material be ready to learn from it and not only to use it for the benefit of his scheme. Intuitive understanding is necessary, but it is not a sufficient condition; omissions must not be blatant and imaginative creation should not replace evidence. In short, there is a distinction between the work of a historian and the work of a historical writer, between a study and a piece of fiction, however well written.

IF IT IS NECESSARY to restate such platitudes, it is because Deutscher's historical works often fall short of such minimum requirements. To begin with, his sources on the Russian revolution are heavily one-sided. In line with his political sympathies, he relies almost entirely on Bolshevik accounts or on Trotsky's version. One has only to glance at the bibliography of the sources to which he refers in *Stalin* to see that, with very few exceptions, the non-communist sources, Russian and foreign, are conspicuously absent, and that even Stalin's own masterpiece of historical falsification, the celebrated *Short Course* of party history, now securely buried, is still listed among the "sources", although it is clear, now as before, that not a single line in this "definitive version" of Stalinist history can be used as a historical reference, but itself has to be checked against genuine sources.

Deutscher is, of course, entitled to his general ideological bias. Even now the history of the French Revolution is still subject to formidable partisan re-interpretations. Ever since Napoleon gave his instructions on how it should be approached (and his angle not unnaturally coincided with Deutscher's own), French historians have continued their battle of re-interpretation, from Michelet through Aulard to Lefevre. But no respectable historian discussing the French Revolution can look at it through a strange combination of Babouvist and Napoleonic spectacles, and then maintain that this restricted view entitles him to claim objectivity. And yet this would be a counterpart to Deutscher's approach to the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. He does not refer at all to the non-Bolshevik material on it (such, for instance, as has been used by Haimson, Treadgold, Keep, or Schapiro). He disregards completely writings by Mensheviks (except Dan), Social Revolutionaries, and Kadets. He has not consulted or pays no attention to various non-Bolshevik documents, ranging from papers by Axelrod to Tsarist police records, which are deposited in various libraries all over the world (such as the Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Columbia University Butler Library in New York, Hoover Library at Stanford and the Library of Congress in Washington). He establishes his credentials by making a sanctimonious reference to Western writers and memoirists on the Second World War: "I hope that in using their evidence I have made sufficient allowance for inevitable bias." However, such primary data as the German Foreign Office documents, published in the book of Zeman and Hahlweg, are not worthy of mention in the new edition of *Stalin*.

In his enthusiasm, Deutscher even implies in one place that the victory of the February Revolution (which, he says, "came from the people itself"), should be attributed to the Bolsheviks. He begins an imaginary conversation between Stalin and the last Tsar with the words "Surely you were defeated not by the war itself, but by the Bolshevik party." A more accurate impression of the subject can be found in C. P. Melgunov, *Martovskie Dni 1917*

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goda. Among secondary sources, Deutscher does not even mention the two volumes by W. H. Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution*, published in 1935. There are only two footnotes to Souvarine's pioneering work on Stalin, although clearly Deutscher must be indebted to it.

But perhaps the greatest defect of Deutscher as historian is his talent as *littérateur*. There is everything to be said for a historical study which is well written. But if this happens only rarely, it is because the literary mind is not well adapted to the utilisation of fact in historical setting, the criteria of literary creation being quite different from the criteria of historical studies. The historical truth and the "artistic truth" do not necessarily coincide. The first obligation of a historian is accuracy. Not dramatic effect, not wistful improvisation, not tidiness in constructing a story, and not a passionate expression of hope, despair, or even of inner understanding—but the cool and sceptical discovery of evidence. Unless he distinguishes between fact and supposition, not after deliberation but as a mental habit, his literary flair will betray him; and the line between history and fiction will be blurred.

THIS is precisely the case with Deutscher. He started as a poet, and he has a tendency to dramatise history, to present it in a series of effective juxtapositions—historical metaphors—to give it literary colour, and all these gifts, which could be splendid in a good historian, are dangerous in one who uses them as substitutes for sober evaluation. His revolutionary romanticism leads him to project himself on to the "scene" of history with which he identifies himself. There the revolutionary *manqué* can strike all the attitudes for which real history offered him no chance. He can identify himself with the actors without genuinely appraising their roles and without really caring much about the wider drama which, as in Marx, involves the masses in the audience, and not, as in Carlyle, just the stage. He can supplement his early fixations with *la révolution intrahisable* by an eternal love of hypostasis and histrionics. In short, writing history can be a compensation rather than a vocation.

This, perhaps, is a lesser evil. We have had in our time enough unaccomplished painters and schoolteachers, seminarists and poet/philosophers projecting their frustration in the opposite direction. It is Deutscher's seductive style which to some extent accounts for the success of his books. The style carries with it the emotional exaggerations, the flights of imagination, and the metaphorical confusion which makes them more often than not historical fiction, which, indeed, is stranger than truth.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to analyse in detail all the inaccuracies in the Stalin biography, just as it is impossible to analyse in detail the connection between Deutscher's style and his historical method. Such textual analysis would require several pages for every one written by Deutscher. But a combination of his literary assets and historiographical liabilities can be illustrated by a fairly representative example. Here, for instance, is how he describes Stalin's "second revolution."

> "The whole experiment seemed to be a piece of prodigious insanity, in which all rules of logic and principles of economics were turned upside down. It was as if a whole nation had suddenly abandoned and destroyed its houses and huts, which, though obsolete and decaying, existed in reality, and moved, lock, stock, and barrel, into some illusory buildings, for which not more than a hint of scaffolding had in reality been prepared; as if that nation had only after this crazy migration set out to make the bricks for the walls of its new dwellings and then found that even the straw for the bricks was lacking; and as if then that whole nation, hungry, dirty, shivering with cold and riddled with disease, had begun a feverish search for the straw, the bricks, the stones, the builders and the masons, so that, by assembling these, they could at last start building homes incomparably more spacious and healthy than were the hastily abandoned slum dwellings of the past. Imagine that the nation numbered 160 million people; and that it was lured, prodded, whipped, and shepherded into that surrealistic enterprise by an ordinary, prosaic, fairly sober man, whose mind had suddenly become possessed by a half-real and half-somnambulistic vision, a man who established himself in the role of super-judge and super-architect, in the role of a modern super-Pharaoh. Such, roughly, was now the strange scene of Russian life, full of torment and hope, full of pathos and of the grotesque; and such was Stalin's place in it; only that the things that he drove the people to build were not useless pyramids. In his own mind he saw himself not as a modern Pharaoh, but as a new Moses leading a chosen nation in the desert."

What *can* one do with this type of history writing? Count the number of *omissio veri*? Or of *suggestio falsi*? Point out that Deutscher *knows* what was happening in Stalin's mind, "suddenly possessed by a half-real and half-somnambulistic vision"? that he attributes to the *whole nation* motives and initiatives which were not there? that he confuses Don Quixote and Sancho Panza? How *can* such a style be related to historical facts?

And would not such an anti-histrionic demonstration seem ungenerous, just as Deutscher's own high-handed generalisations about what ultimately are individual sufferings seem morally insensitive, if

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historically imaginative? We are all strong enough to stand up to other people's sufferings, particularly if our historical heroics can be done at a distance. To fortify ourselves we only have to repeat after Pope, "Whatever is, is right", or after Hegel, "Whatever is real, is rational", or after Marx, "History never puts on its agenda the tasks which cannot be accomplished."

Yet in no case are flights of imagination a substitute for evidence in the biographies of historical personalities. Deutscher's work reflects his Immaculate Conception of the Revolution, which underlies everything he writes ("I do not see how the revelations about Stalin's crimes can convert anybody, except persons vacillating under the shock, to believe in private property or in the Immaculate Conception", *Nuovi Argomenti,* No. 57/58, 1962). As for any true believer, it is all a matter of faith and conversion, one way or another.

IN THIS LIGHT it is possible to understand the special meaning he attaches to such expressions as historical objectivity and writing *sine ira et studio.* His scientific model is Lenin, that "critical student in the laboratory of thought", who pursued research "with an open and disinterested mind" (*Stalin*, p. 118). It is not surprising that with such an idea of scientific disinterestedness Deutscher wrote his book the way he did. In his mind Leninist *partiinost* coexists with "bourgeois objectivity", and his own partisanship with the claim to be *au dessus de la mêlée.* In the new introduction to *Stalin* he writes:

> "Although, or rather because, I had written my book as an outsider to the cold war and refused to echo the battle cries and shibboleths of the two camps, my book implicitly made a hash of this notion; and so inevitably it became involved in the cold war and became the crusader's target.*Habent sua fata libelli.*"

Mr Deutscher is mistaken in thinking that his *Stalin* is an objective or impartial work because it was criticised both by the *Daily Worker* and by Dr Franz Borkenau. For the conflict with Borkenau was fundamental, whereas the dispute with the *Daily Worker,* however bitter, was a kind of family quarrel within the common Leninist heritage. What Leninist, after all, has not been attacked at one time or another by the *Daily Worker,* especially in Stalin's days? If Mr Deutscher's book aroused so much passionate resentment and hostility (as he notes in his 1960 introduction) this had to do not so much with what he said; after all there were far more emphatic apologies for Stalin published at the time, but none tried to pass as an objective study by a detached scholar. What antagonises so many foreign observers of Russia is not only Soviet reality but also the persistent attempts to embellish that reality, to declare it the best of all possible worlds. In a similar way, Deutscher's *Stalin* minus the pretence of objectivity would almost certainly have created much less resentment.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF STALIN was published at the height of the "cult of Stalin's personality" in the Soviet Union. The summit of historical sycophancy had been reached. *Pravda* was carrying lengthy panegyrics for months on end to celebrate his seventieth birthday. Tito was already excommunicated and Moscow Trials were being exported to the countries of Eastern Europe. Internally, Zhdanovism reigned supreme and the NKVD was taking care of the rest.

Faced with this situation, a free historian chose to elevate its creator to a certain sinister dignity and sombre grandeur. That was his right: historians do not just collect information, they have also to use their powers of interpretation and imagination. But it is not only a matter of taste and bias. Admitting the necessity of interpretation, and hence of the inevitable bias of the historian, there remains a certain minimum of rigour without which history would indeed only be "a tale told by an idiot."

Some facts can be established and there is no room for argument about them. There is a difference between bias and inaccuracy, and this is particularly important in the context of Soviet historiography. Confronted with a falsification of history on an unprecedented scale, the suppression of facts and the creation of myths on a conveyor belt by state-historians, it is not just an elementary duty of the historian to be pedantic about the facts, he has to re-establish the truth.

IN THIS RESPECT TOO Deutscher's work falls short. Not only because of his tendency to mythologise through his interpretative flights of imagination, but also because he is often wrong about "primary facts." These lapses are not conscious distortions, but arise from his ideological obsessions. He was caught between his own cult of history and the contemporary "cult of personality", and the result was that many facts acquired a slant which helped to shape the Stalinist myth from the outside while it was being synthetically elaborated from within.

This was pointed out at the time, in a long memorandum to which Deutscher refers in the introduction to the new edition of *Stalin,* by David and Boris Shub, who accused him of a "multitude of inaccuracies." Deutscher says that the supporting quotations were "torn out of context or crudely distorted" but does not dispute the actual charges. He dismisses them high-handedly as an "underhand attack" and a "comic incident", which could have had some effect only in "the political climate of the time."

But no amount of obfuscation and one-upmanship will change the fact that the

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inaccuracies in *Stalin* are no more acceptable in the post-Stalin climate of opinion than at the time when Deutscher's subject was committing his own "errors and distortions." Deutscher's cloak of objectivity conceals not only a definite political tendency but serious scholarly deficiencies as well, which often makes his presentation of facts misleading. His historical technique often corresponds to his journalistic technique. As a counterpart to his eavesdropping at the meetings of the Presidium we have *historia arcana* whose only basis is Deutscher's imagination. In neither role does he indicate that his statements are guesses, and what may or may not be considered excusable in a journalist dealing with the current scene is certainly not pardonable in the writing of history. Two instances can be quoted: Deutscher's treatment of the Kirov and the Tukhachevsky affairs.

THE KIROV MURDER, which unleashed the wave of terror and served as a prelude to the Great Purge, is described with the confidence of one who has full knowledge of the circumstances of the case:

> "The quasi-Liberal spell was suddenly interrupted when on 1 December 1934 a young oppositional communist Nikolayev, assassinated Sergei Kirov in Leningrad. Stalin rushed to Leningrad and personally interrogated the terrorist in the course of many hours. He established that the assassin had belonged to a small group of young communists embittered by the oppressive atmosphere in the country. . . . He probably also found out that it was Kirov's liberalism that enabled the terrorists to gain access to his offices in the Smolny Institute. . . . He drew the conclusion that the time for quasi-Liberal concession was over."

The source for this version is given: it is Stalin's own *Short History of the CPSU,* which in fact does not contain all the details given above. Some of them are invented independently by Deutscher, who in fact knew no more than anybody else what had actually happened. Among other signs of the "quasi-Liberal spell" Deutscher mentions the renaming of the GPU, now the NKVD, and the nomination of Vyshinsky as Attorney-General. As to the circumstances of the murder, he simply repeats the official Stalinist case, without so much as hinting that there might be some doubt about its authenticity, and without indicating that his own presentation of it is pure guesswork. He must have heard of other versions, some of which attributed Kirov's murder to Stalin. There was the thesis of his murdered hero in *Bulletin Oppozitsii,* where Trotsky put forward some of the speculations which much later were reinforced by Khrushchev's admission in his "secret speech" that "the circumstances of Kirov's murder hide many things which are inexplicable and mysterious and demand a most serious investigation. . . ." But on this occasion Deutscher preferred to suppress the voice of his murdered hero and give the version of his murderous anti-hero who was still alive. A grand historical synthesis requires a dramatic treatment, in which the certainty of details, and qualifications as to their reliability are unnecessary academic paraphernalia. Trotsky's and Nikolaevsky's speculations were known when *Stalin* was first published (both *Bulletin Oppozitsii* and *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik,* where they appeared, are in Deutscher's bibliography); Khrushchev's remarks on the subject were made long before the appearance of the second edition. They are passed over in silence.

At the 22nd Congress Khrushchev made even more explicit allusion to Stalin's responsibility; and the new edition of the Party history reiterates that "*the circumstances of the case are still being* clarified." Thus we have a somewhat ironical situation: while Soviet readers are no longer compelled to read Stalin's own presentation of the case, the Western readers of Deutscher's new paperback edition are still today learning the "established historical facts" about the Kirov affair in their unadulterated Stalinist version!

ON THE TUKHACHEVSKY AFFAIR Deutscher admits that "the exact circumstances of Tukhachevsky's plot and of its collapse are not known", but he has no doubt about its existence:

> "The real conspiracy was begun by the leaders of the army, Tukhachevsky and his associates. . . . All non-Stalinist versions concur in the following: the generals did indeed plan a *coup d'état* . . . Tukhachevsky was the moving spirit of the conspiracy."

All non-Stalinist versions referred to turn out to be three references in a footnote, of which two are highly unreliable and the third, Krivitsky's *I Was Stalin's Agent,* has no page reference, which is not surprising as Krivitsky not only does *not* "concur", but directly contradicts Deutscher's version. General Krivitsky in fact describes how "Stalin's scheme to 'frame' Tukhachevsky and the other generals had been set in motion at least six months before the alleged discovery of a Red Army conspiracy" (p. 234).

The use of a reference which proves exactly the contrary is not scholarly custom. But Deutscher goes further. He does not disclose that Tukhachevsky's name was mentioned eleven times in an exchange between Vyshinsky and Radek at Radek's trial on 24 January 1937. This was a sure sign that Stalin had begun to draw his net round the Soviet Marshal, just as those implicated in the earlier Moscow trials were the next on the list of victims for the subsequent trials. Neither does he mention Krivitsky's allegation that the "evidence"

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against Tukhachevsky was fed to the Gestapo through the OGPU agents in the Tsarist émigré organisation and then fed back to Russia through Czechoslovakia. This is a version partly confirmed by Hoettl, Schellenberg, and Churchill's memoirs, and referred to by Khrushchev at the 22nd Congress (although he doubtless had more direct sources), and by Gomulka at the IX Plenum of the Polish Communist party. Tukhachevsky has now been declared "a loyal son of the motherland" and a victim of "unjustified repression" (*Red Star*, 24 March 1962).

Khrushchev's historiography cannot, of course, be taken at face value any more than Stalin's; but it is clear that even now the case remains highly conjectural, and was even more so when *Stalin* first appeared. Deutscher committed the double offence of presenting a pro-Stalinist version as the anti-Stalinist version, and of treating it as an established fact:

> "The men who tried to put an end to Stalin's rule, Tukhachevsky and his associates, acted behind the back of the people, as a small, strictly secret group of conspirators. Therein lay their fatal weakness. . . ."

THE Kirov and Tukhachevsky affairs are examples of Deutscher writing as if he knows when he does not. But he also has the opposite tendency of being more cautious than the available

Unimpeachable Sources

LET ME ADD *(in 1978) a few remarks on the preface to the subsequent 1967 edition of* Stalin, *in which Deutscher wrote:*

> **"It is possible . . . that my account of the Tukhachevsky affair may need some revision; but if so, Khrushchev and his successors have not provided the elements necessary for such a revision, despite the fact that they have rehabilitated Tukhachevsky and cleared him of the charge that he plotted against Stalin in Germany's interest, as Hitler's agent. In my account of the affair I emphatically refuted that accusation; but I related a version drawn from unimpeachably anti-Stalinist sources (quoted in a footnote on p. 380), according to which Tukhachevsky planned a *coup* against Stalin, in order to save the army and the country from the insane terror of the purges. This version may be mistaken; but Khrushchev and his successors have not revealed a single document or a single fact that would throw light on the affair and allow us to dismiss altogether the anti-Stalinist accounts which insisted on the reality of the plot."**

This self-exculpation shows the typical traits of Deutscher's self-righteousness: unwillingness to admit error, retrospective verbal apologetics, artful fact-twisting.

The footnote on p. 380 contains references which are anything but "unimpeachable" or are even all "unimpeachably anti-Stalinist." As noted above, Krivitsky's account is precisely opposite to what Deutscher claims it is. Krivitsky wrote that Stalin "plotted the extermination of the High Command of the Red Army . . . long before [he] 'suddenly' discovered a Red Army plot against his power", that he "used fake 'evidence' imported from Germany and manufactured by the Nazi Gestapo in his frame-up of the most loyal generals of the Red Army. . . ." Of the other two sources quoted, one, E. Wollenberg, The Red Army *(1938), can hardly be treated seriously as evidence. The author maintained (pp. 239–247) that "according to reliable sources of information there was actually a plan for a 'palace revolution' and the overthrow of Stalin's dictatorship by forcible means." The plot was headed by Gamarnik and Tukhachevsky. The plan (fixed for the middle of May 1937) was that the Red Army units were to break the resistance of the GPU troops commanded by Marshal* (sic) *Yagoda, occupy the Kremlin, and restore "the Soviet democracy." But the conspirators were arrested in the early weeks of May and "promptly shot." Thus not only were they prevented from seizing power, but also from carrying out "the foreign political programme of the Tukhachevsky-Gamarnik group" which consisted of "the activisation of the Soviet foreign policy in dealing with Japanese imperialism and German and Italian fascism and promoting the Socialist World Revolution." Wollenberg did not disclose his "reliable sources of information", and his allegations are unsupported by any proof.*

Deutscher's third source, an article by M. Bobrov, published in Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik *in 1947, has even less claim to credibility.* Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik *published in September, October and November 1947 three articles by M. Bobrov. The last of them was accompanied by an editorial note stating that "much in the views and conclusions expressed in them is wrong or not demonstrated, as we will try to explain in our reply to the author." In the subsequent (December 1947) issue, the editor of* Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik, *Raphael Abramovich, wrote that Bobrov "uses the word 'plot' in a specifically GPU sense", that "one does not know where he got his information", and that "it is difficult to know how much truth there is in all this." So much for Deutscher's "anti-Stalinist" accounts of the Tukhachevsky affair!*

But there is even more to it. In 1962 Solomon Schwartz, the other editor of Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik, *explained to me that the editors had regretted the publication of these articles because they discovered that they had been written (under a pseudonym) by a shady character whom they suspected of being a Soviet* agent-provocateur.

Such are the "unimpeachable" sources which are the basis of Deutscher's version of the Tukhachevsky affair, a version which after all was left unchanged in the last (1967) edition of Stalin.

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evidence permits and when the benefit of his doubt is all *ad usum Stalini*. Such, for example, is the case of the Katyn massacre on which Deutscher writes that:

> "there were reasons to suspect that the Germans themselves, who were then putting millions of people to death, might have been guilty of the deed."

This statement sounds reasonable enough to a reader who may not know that at the time it was written there was *already* a formidable body of evidence in Polish (and thus available to Deutscher) which indicated clearly that this particular crime should not be attributed to Hitler but to Stalin.

Other examples of Deutscher's misleading technique are legion. Thus, Stalin's distrust of the old intelligentsia is explained in terms which match his own accusations:

> "Old technicians and administrators viewed his projects with cool scepticism and even open hostility. Some sided with one or the other opposition. A few persisted in an attitude of defeatism which led them to obstruct or even to sabotage the economic plans."

This innuendo could easily be used to justify the trial of the Mensheviks (which Trotsky condemned in his exile), of the Industrial Party, or even the Moscow Trials which Deutscher so eloquently denounced.

His writing technique also includes what might be called a "double treatment", i.e. a presentation of an unfavourable item followed by a softening of it by a philosophical ratiocination, some form of qualification, or a plain misstatement of fact. Stalin's Great Purge is summarised thus:

> "It is not necessary to assume that he acted from sheer cruelty or lust of power. He may be given the dubious credit of the sincere conviction that he did serve the interest of the revolution and that he alone interpreted those interests aright."

Indeed, it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise; both for himself and for Deutscher, Stalin was an instrument of history itself. He embodied the Marxist historical necessity in his ruthlessness, and in his alleged bursts of "liberalism." When in 1939 the Great Purge had come to an end, "the statutes of the party were amended in a quasi-Liberal spirit." It was just then that Beria was appointed (replacing Yezhov), and Beria was to become in Deutscher's phrase "a liberal chief of police" after Stalin's death.

Stalin's callous role *vis-à-vis* the Warsaw anti-Nazi uprising of 1944 can hardly be discerned in Deutscher's biography. His description of this historical episode is wrapped up in all kinds of circumlocutions and allowances, including the statement that the uprising was "unexpected." As a matter of historical fact the Soviet-sponsored radio in Polish appealed for weeks on end to the inhabitants of Warsaw to rise in revolt.

BUT THE MOST DECEPTIVE ELEMENTS in Deutscher's writing technique are the historical metaphors. He is ready to produce them, like rabbits out of a magician's hat, on any occasion. They usually centre around the French Revolution, but sometimes they stray to other periods. They are as suggestive as they are misleading.

Not only Cromwell, Robespierre, and Napoleon, but also Tsar Alexander, the Iron Chancellor Bismarck, and even Pope Alexander Borgia—all serve to explain the inevitability of Stalin. And so does Marx:

> "In spite of its 'blood and dirt', the English industrial revolution—Marx did not dispute this—marked a tremendous progress in the history of mankind. It opened a new and not unhopeful epoch of civilisation. Stalin's industrial revolution can claim the same merit."

Soviet industrialisation has many common features with other processes of industrialisation, but it also differs from them in important respects. Some of its economic features may be comparable; but its political, cultural, technological and demographic background is *sui generis*. However, a sweeping historical metaphor takes care of all these peculiarities. A glance at the Time-table of History—obviously privately revealed to Deutscher—is supposed to dispel any doubts about the progressive character of the Stalinist method of industrialisation:

> "It is argued against it that it has perpetrated cruelties excusable in earlier centuries but unforgivable in this. This is a valid argument, but only within limits. Russia has been belated in her historical development."

Deutscher does not care to explain what these "limits" are, but in another of his historical comparisons he stresses that Stalin was not quite unique.

> "As an inspirer of revolution from above, Stalin does not stand alone in modern European history. He takes his place by the side of Napoleon and Bismarck, from whom in other respects he differs so much."

But the "differences" are not emphasised, and the analogy is extended to foreign policy.

> "It is mainly in Napoleon's impact upon the lands neighbouring France that the analogy is found for the impact of Stalinism upon Eastern and Central Europe."

Is there really an "analogy" between—say—Scharnhorst and the recently rehabilitated Traicho Kostov or between Andreas Hofer and the

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unrehabilitated Nikola Petkov? (At least, neither Scharnhorst nor Hofer ever needed rehabilitation. . . .)

Napoleon–Stalin liberating Poland from the Tsar Alexander imperceptibly changes into Alexander–Stalin who subjugated it:

> "The complaints of British and American negotiators about Stalin's capriciousness may still be best expressed in Byron's words about Alexander:
>
> *Now half dissolving to a liberal thaw*
> *But hardened back whene'er the morning's raw. . .*
>
> *How nobly gave he back to Poles their Diet*
> *Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet.*
>
> It is curious how the analogy can be extended from major issues down to details."

These details do not include the suppression of the democratic parties in Eastern Europe. Deutscher admits that when during the War the Polish issue was negotiated by Stalin, his granting of "testimonials of good democratic conduct was extremely grotesque." But this is immediately followed by a remark that "it would be wrong to describe Stalin's action as mere trickery, strong as was the element of trickery in it", because (apart from other reasons) "he undoubtedly believed that what he did served a profoundly democratic purpose. . . ."

However, "only after the War was the Bolshevik in Stalin to reassert himself so strongly as to efface Alexander's likeness. . . ." By then his "eyes were fixed primarily on revolutions in Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade, and Prague." The revolutions were not there, but can't they always be exported "on bayonets" for progressive purposes? In the Baltic countries, Stalin "had no intention of tampering with their social system" and it was only his sense of danger after the collapse of France which "impelled him to stage revolutions in the three small countries." And after the War—

> "The gradual integration into the system of planned economy of several small and medium-sized countries, most of which had been industrially more developed than Russia before the thirties, promised to quicken the tempo of Russia's as well as of their own reconstruction. The first condition of that integration was that communism should be in power in the countries concerned. In treading this path Stalin tacitly admitted that the productive forces of the Soviet Union revolted, to use Trotsky's favourite expression, against its national boundaries."

With this Marxist argument for Soviet imperialism, it is not quite clear whether it was Napoleon or Alexander in Stalin who propelled him in all these actions. But internally, once the War was over—

> "Stalin's effort to restore moral supremacy of the party was coupled with his endeavour to re-establish the party outlook as against the nationalist mood of the preceding years."

This was not easy, particularly as Stalin was soon to launch the "Russia First" campaign in which it was stressed that "Popov" invented almost everything, from radio to penicillin. Deutscher notes that at that time "millions of former forced labourers returned home from a long sojourn in Germany", but does not mention that after their return they were deported to the Soviet forced labour camps (like the Buchenwald inmate, Senka Klevshin, in Solzhenitsyn's novel). He stresses instead—

> "the abolition of capital punishment, the quasi-Liberal modification of the criminal code, the emphasis on *habeas corpus* and on the rule of law, and a number of post-war reforms."

The reason for this was apparently that Stalin–Alexander remembered Stalin–Napoleon. He knew that the Red Army soldiers saw foreign countries during the War and this generated in them "a yearning for freedom and a curiosity which the government was ill-equipped to satisfy." Stalin decided to have these "quasi-Liberal" reforms because he was aware of

> "the sequel to the ferment which arose in the army of Alexander I from its contact with Europe. Barely a few years after the victory over Napoleon the Tsar's officers' corps was riddled with secret societies, formed by men whom the observations of life abroad had induced to fight for reform at home. After Alexander's death those secret societies prepared and staged the Decembrist rising of 1825, the forerunner of a long series of revolutionary convulsions."

Having been subjected by Deutscher to so many retrospective reincarnations, the reader is not surprised that the Bolshevik in Stalin reasserted himself not only against Alexander but also against Napoleon; and he dismissed Zhukov.

All these historical metaphors were used when Stalin was alive. After his death they were supplemented by another one, shifting the parallel from Alexander I, the head of the Russian Orthodox church, to Alexander VI, the head of the Roman Catholic church. In a debate organised by the Italian journal *Espresso* (17 December 1961), Deutscher declared:

> "To speak about the influence of Stalinism on Russia and upon international communism is much more complicated than to speak for example about the influence of the Borgias' period on international Catholicism and upon Italy. There is, however, a certain vague similarity between the two historical situations, in so far as we, the Marxists, never believed that

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it would be possible to have in our movement a 'period of Borgias.' And yet we did have it. If one wants to push the analogy still further, we can find a precedent also for Khrushchev, considering that after the death of Alexander VI there was a phase devoted to the 'liquidation of the crimes of the Borgias'. . . ."

The Italian Communist party leader, Giancarlo Pajetta, was evidently not over-impressed by this reasoning, and he replied somewhat ironically:

"The parallel between Stalin and Borgia does not seem to me too well founded, even if the analogy may have some brilliant aspects. From the point of view of the Marxist analysis it is devoid of all significance. The Church before Alexander VI was certainly not dominated by followers of apostolic communism, nor afterwards did we have popes who wanted to restore the primitive christianity of the evangelical epoch."

The moral seems to be that neither the Cult of History nor the Cult of Personality offers the right views about history or personality.

IT WAS NOT NECESSARY to have a "historical perspective" to assess Deutscher's *Stalin* Shortly after its publication many reviewers pointed out its methods and its political bias. Others, however, like the anonymous reviewer in *The Times Literary Supplement* (10 June 1949), proclaimed that "until the coming of a new generation allows a new perspective to be attained, the present biography will not easily be superseded."

That new generation is evidently not yet with us, not even in the Soviet Union; still, Deutscher's book badly needs to be superseded, and now more than ever. Fourteen years have passed since its publication and today its perspective looks more twisted than before, its mistakes more glaring, its misconceptions more obvious; its whole tendency seems anachronistic. It was only with the progress of "de-Stalinisation" that Deutscher finally thought of mentioning the "Borgia perspective." He had used the words "quasi-Liberal" or "semi-Liberal" with monotonous frequency to describe attitudes or acts of Stalin and Beria. If he stresses today the "critical" elements of his analysis, that only shows his dexterity. He is a historian whom his own Deity, History, has proved wrong on so many points, but he goes on confirming his own rectitude:

"I prepared *The Great Contest* [1961] for its first publication in the Winter of 1959-60. Subsequent events seem to me to have confirmed in all essentials my analyses and forecasts, even though these were concerned with the long-term prospects of Soviet policy rather than with immediate developments."

There is one apt remark in *Stalin:*

"The semi-intelligentsia from whom socialism recruited some of its middle cadres enjoyed Marxism as a mental labour-saving device, easy to handle and fabulously effective."

Deutscher contrasts with it a more refined form of "pristine" Marxism, but it still seems relevant to his own intellectual processes. In Deutscher's scheme the shining knights of the Leninist epoch were slain by the Dark Knight who performed a "progressive" work which will usher in an epoch when the pure faith in its "pristine" form will be restored and implemented. Many, though not all, deficiencies of Deutscher's political biography of Stalin derive from this infantile fixation.

It is a melancholy comment on our period, full as it is of gullibility, ignorance, and the corruption of standards, that a book of this sort, with its political fantasies and scholarly shortcomings, could have been praised by famous men and even acclaimed by some as a "classic."

Country Workman

(Greece, 1978)

He carries wild herbs in a plastic bag,
his shoes are made of old tyres
and his jacket is army-surplus.

But from his small-talk at the café
the old, collective
dreams will come to amaze us.

In concrete huts amongst the olive trees
live tales of chance, of poison and the knife,
of Agamemnon, the House of Atreus.

Glyn Hughes

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DISCUSSION

Crosland Reconsidered

The Man Who Took too Much for Granted—By COLIN WELCH

In his politics David Marquand is a representative figure for his generation. Anti-Tory by background and temperament, he was convinced by the Labour revisionist creed of Mr Anthony Crossland, and The Future of Socialism *became his bible. . . . It is a sad thing, he says, that Mr Crosland's* The Future of Socialism *could not be written today, simply because those who are active and committed to Labour politics do not have the time or the energy to stand back and see clearly what is going on.*

THE TIMES (*London*)

IS IT TOO FANCIFUL to suppose that across the last years of Mr Anthony Crosland's life, so tragically cut short, a certain shadow fell? Gone or waning was that former self-assurance and inner certainty, amounting at one time almost to arrogance. In conversation he retained at will his wit and charm. Yet a certain weariness and indifference, a growing detachment, showed itself in the increasing gladness—or at least tolerance—with which he suffered those he would once have thought fools. Was he perhaps no longer convinced of his own wisdom and good judgment? In some ways he seemed to have become more human, more fallible, more genial, more gently quizzical, even in a way more apologetic. Yet one felt—perhaps wrongly—that a spring had broken, that an inner light had gone out, that purpose and bearings had been lost, that—as once for another distinguished and clever politician—it would never be glad confident morning again.

Is it too fanciful? Perhaps; but, if not, it would be silly to search in his personal life for any cause. Just before his death he told Ivan Rowan of the *Sunday Telegraph* how he and his wife had agreed that if they were killed together (say, in a plane crash) they could have no regrets—everything had been worthwhile. He added: "What a marvellous life it has been!" Friends all testify to his domestic happiness.

Was it the strain of high office? We may doubt whether a man so capable was ever overstretched by any of the positions he held.

Was it, then, thwarted ambition? This too we may doubt, at least in part. Indeed he must have been aware of his intellectual superiority to most of his colleagues. He may well have thought himself in particular better qualified to be Chancellor than any of those who were preferred to him. He would have been a very unorthodox Chancellor, perhaps, who proclaimed that "rapid growth requires a reversal of these priorities [i.e. growth must be given a higher priority than the value of the pound and a healthy balance of payments] and a Government which really *believes* [his italics] in expansion", and who proposed to hold down inflation not primarily by monetary restraint but rather by fiscal measures and direct controls. Or has bitter experience taught us by now to regard such Chancellors as orthodox?

He must himself have relished the irony which placed instead at the Foreign Office a man like himself who, to judge from his published works, had little interest in international affairs, and who regarded foreign countries primarily as examples (often ill-chosen for his purpose) to us of how to conduct the domestic economic affairs which preoccupied him or, alternatively, as recipients of the lavish British aid he was always eager to dispense.

Perhaps he had higher dreams still. Certainly he never went out of his way to offend those of his colleagues who differed from him and whose support he might yet need in any eventual serious bid for the Labour leadership. (He stood last time and came bottom out of six, with only 17 votes.) His commitment to our joining Europe, for instance, quite explicit in those massive works from which few of his colleagues could probably quote at will, became in practice at the crunch conveniently ambiguous and unimportant to him. Yet, on the other hand, he never stooped to the base intriguing

C. A. R. CROSLAND *died on 19 February 1977 in Oxford at the age of 58. See in* ENCOUNTER (*August 1977*) *the three appreciations from writers in the tradition of "the Left"—Michael Young, John Vaizey and Daniel Bell.*

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and ingratiating arts by which people like Sir Harold Wilson and Mr James Callaghan became leader: his grand indolent manner[1] and independent character probably forbade it.

A QUESTION REMAINS, moreover. Could an intellectual of this sort, who thought so much, who wrote and achieved so much in the world of the mind, who had such influence and changed so many minds by persuasion; whose *Future of Socialism* was described by Dr William Pickles as "the most important on its subject since Eduard Bernstein published his famous work in 1898" and by Hugh Dalton as "brilliant, original and brave . . . by far the most important book on Socialism in England since the War"; who was so refreshingly right about so many things that his works were read with approval by many who can hardly have shared, perhaps did not even notice, his general purpose; who 20-odd years ago did so much to make socialism seem respectable, undoctrinaire and safe, clearly the most sensible and humane if not the only way of running our affairs—could such a man ever know the sheer unadulterated greed for power which obsesses men who have no other means of winning eminence? Surely not: we may think of him rather like Bishop Blougram, musing with a smile,

> *I am much, you are nothing; you would be all,*
> *I would be merely much. You beat me there.*

YET IF WE DO BELIEVE that some shadow fell on his last years, and if we seek a reason for it, perhaps we have already stumbled on it. Was it the shadow thrown by *The Future of Socialism* (1956) and by its lesser successor, *The Conservative Enemy* (1962), in which various of its themes are developed and varied? For this future, this "future of socialism" was no remote millennial Utopia, to be achieved in distant years to come by the patient selfless work of generations or, if sooner, by some shattering cataclysm. No, it was the immediate, practical and attainable future, to be started at once and to be pushed rapidly and effortlessly through, bringing in its train no paradise indeed, no finite Utopia, but valuable and measurable benefits to all save the rich and wicked few, with the prospect of more to come. It was painless socialism, socialism without tears; or so it said. It is recognisably, in outline if not in detail, the socialism that has prevailed in this country, apart from the first part of Mr Edward Heath's bizarre interregnum, since 1964. Of all that this socialism has by intent done, much was explicitly or implicitly urged upon it by Mr Crosland and nothing that I can think of expressly forbidden.

Yes, even the so-called "social contract" (Wilson's version, not Rousseau's) was his child in all but name.

> "We must have a prices and incomes policy [he told trade unions in Copenhagen in 1971]. Such a policy is only possible within a framework of government policies for greater social and economic equality as a whole. It is no good simply asking the trade unions to cooperate in a prices and incomes policy against a background of reactionary social policies. . . ."

In other, more cynical words, the unions demand and are to get, in return for something valueless which they cannot deliver, the ruin of the nation—"the social con-trick", as Jock Bruce-Gardyne has called it.

Mr Crosland was thus condemned to live in his own future. He saw it, and it didn't work. As a younger man he had always been shrewd and percipient, ever ready to re-examine the evidence, conspicuously unready to take old dogma on trust—his major works give short shrift to old twaddle and new, from Marx to Galbraith. Could such a man fail to notice that most of his major benign predictions had come unstuck; that what he had once taken for granted now shook and crumbled beneath his feet; that some of those people and views he had once scoffed at were beginning to look a bit wiser; that what he had advocated, wherever it had been put into effect, had produced few of the foretold blessings and many of the disastrous consequences he had pooh-poohed; and that his own reservations and hesitations, by no means few even if unemphatic, were being endowed by the grimly and inexorably unfolding future of socialism with an ever greater and sadder significance? It must have been like living in a haunted house, a place built in a sunnier season for comfort and beauty, yet infested now by the spectres of hopes blasted and dark fears crowding in.

It is true that in 1974, in essays and speeches reviewing the first Harold Wilson régime[2] and plotting the way ahead, his understanding of what had gone wrong, the extent of it and why, seemed most imperfect. His pages abound indeed with lamentations and breast-beatings: "nobody disputes the central failure of [Mr Wilson's] economic policy"—"the performance (and I must take my share of responsibility) did not live up to the hopes which we . . . had entertained"—"general disappointment"—"this dismal record creates a public mood of discord and discontent"—"the economy is in a state of semi-permanent crisis, and inflation is rampant"—"this wretched showing, for which all of us who were in government must share responsibility"—"the record of growth has been

[1] "Indolent manner", yes, but those books were not written by an *indolent* man!

[2] *Socialism Now and Other Essays*. Edited by Dick Leonard (Jonathan Cape, London).

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lamentable; the facts are dreary and familiar", and so forth. What renders these confessions and apologies sterile is his failure to examine possible connections between policies he thought good and developments he recognised to be bad. The real cause for all that went wrong for Harold Wilson was, I think, in Crosland's view "the basic decision not to alter the exchange rate", i.e. not to devalue the pound: from this mistake all other evils flowed. And indeed, if it was a mistake, it was one for which Crosland for all his protestations could bear only nominal, formal responsibility—for he had certainly never bothered himself much about the value of the pound. Thus self-absolved, the blame shifted implicitly on to one major but inessential error, not to be repeated and not really his own, he is free to justify his own and Labour's general record.

For instance, the rise in public expenditure under Wilson from 41 to 48% of G.N.P., so pregnant with evil as some might think, is regarded by him as "solid progress" . . . "impressive" . . . "a brave performance."[3] About education he is more crudely specific:

> "expenditure in education rose from 4.8% of G.N.P. in 1964 to 6.1% in 1970. As a result, all classes of the community *enjoyed significantly more education than before.*"

(My italics, to emphasise the iron link in his mind between money spent and value got, as though in this case spending *equals* learning; by such standards the housewife who is continually diddled in the shops enjoys significantly more goods than the one who is not.) He quotes with approval Michael Stewart, who referred to "a measurable improvement [*sic*] in the distribution of income" as one of Prime Minister Wilson's "main achievements"—an "improvement" marked by a fall in profits from 15.6 to 12.3% and by a "large increase" in social benefits, producing "a favourable effect." With the same grim complacency might an alcoholic sadly review a past year of disasters, of declining health and mental powers, of mounting debts, of failure and ruin approaching inexorably, and yet conclude that the picture was not *wholly* black: after all, he had managed to keep up his alcohol intake, even to "improve" it, a "brave performance" in the circumstances.

THE PREVIOUS OPTIMISM has gone; full self-realisation is yet to come. Did it ever come? How can we know for sure? The Costa Rica lecture of 1975[4] denies it; it keeps up a brave front. Yet is it not a fact, apparent to us all as we grow older, that the capacity of the mind for really new thought, for constructive self-criticism, grows atrophied? We tend to repeat and develop what we once thought, modified as little as experience and disillusion will permit. Not to be envied is the man who in youth equipped himself with a *Weltanschauung* which, however imposing, does not fit the times through which he is later condemned to live. What he thought and said he thinks still and says. But his heart is not in it; the season is unpropitious, and he shivers at the nip in the air; the party is over.

BUT I go too fast. Let me return to the two books which made and consolidated his reputation, not least because they appeared initially in part in these ENCOUNTER pages.

"My political misfortune", he confessed in Costa Rica, "is that I was born an optimist." Despite their sometimes impatient, exasperated or even petulant tone, *The Future of Socialism* and its successor seemed at the time extremely *optimistic* books. They seem almost incredibly so now, in darker times. All problems were solved or readily soluble, all hopes securely grounded, all dangers illusory. With confidence the Captain Crosland of those days tapped the barometer, stuck at "set fair." In such weather it seemed to him perfectly safe to neglect all traditional precautions, to take on cargo and passengers till the Plimsoll line was well below the surface, to run down the fuel reserves and to steer near the rocks. What was needed was boldness, "verve and determination"; the risks were negligible. In 1956 it was clear to him that "the British economy is behaving in a reasonably buoyant and productive manner and there is certainly no sign of imminent collapse. The present rate of growth will continue." This being so,

> "material want and poverty and deprivation of essential goods will gradually cease to be a problem. We shall increasingly need to focus attention . . . not on the economic causes of distress but on the social and psychological causes. We shall want the advice not of the economists but of psychiatrists, sociologists and social psychiatrists."

Crosland characteristically foresaw a time, "as material standards rise, when divorce law reform will increase the sum of human welfare more than a rise in the food subsidies. . . ." The dismal science, in his own hands so far from dismal, would make way for pseudo-science, the benign rule of crackpots presiding over more and more broken homes. He noted "a world-wide change in the economic climate."

> "The business community [he went on] accepts the fact that prosperity is here to stay, not only because full employment will be maintained but

[3] In 1976 it was about 54 per cent of G.N.P.—braver still!

[4] C. A. R. Crosland, *Social Democracy in Europe* (Fabian Tract 438, 1975).

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also because we have entered a period of rapid growth in personal incomes and consumption."

In these happy circumstances, he no longer regarded "questions of growth and efficiency as being, on a long view, of primary importance to socialism. We stand, in Britain, on the threshold of mass abundance." He took too much for granted.

By 1962 his optimism had by no means abated, though he himself in retrospect thought it had. He thought then that by 1964 prosperity, hitherto a Tory prerogative, might be taken for granted by an electorate which might thus feel itself free to vote Labour again. Perhaps it did so take it for granted; certainly he did. He mocked those Labour MPs who decried the then prevailing prosperity as "bogus" or "phoney", due to be "engulfed in an inevitable slump." They had "no warrant" for such a view. "Something approaching full employment will be maintained in Britain", he assured them, "if only because the Conservatives know that a failure here would lead to defeat at the polls." At this point as elsewhere he displays his conviction that full employment can in all circumstances be maintained by government action, such as a "continuing mild inflation", so swift and sure and harmless in its effects that it would be madness for any government not to take it. He thus ignores the possibility that inflation, in order to perform (or rather to strive vainly to perform) the beneficent tasks allotted to it by him and its other advocates, must become less and less mild, more and more rapid and progressive, always a little bit more than expected; for "expected" inflation is discounted in advance and produces no effect on demand. He was fated to see an unprecedented inflation and high and rising unemployment—a combination he must have found puzzling and disquieting.

IN COSTA RICA he referred to "pessimists" who "fear the consequences for democracy of a combination of slow economic growth and rapid inflation in societies where rising expectations have developed from aspirations into fierce demands." In this malign development he himself had played his part, by continuously inflating aspirations and expectations into *rights*, not reasonably to be withheld. Add then to the witches' brew of slow growth, inflation, and "fierce demands" a further ingredient, unemployment, and indeed those silly old pessimists might well shake in their shoes.

He further deplored in 1962

> "a strange sad alliance between the Conservatives and the extreme 'Left', both contending (falsely) that we are at the limits of taxable capacity in the mixed economy. The Conservatives . . . maintain that higher taxation would inhibit economic growth; the extreme 'Left' . . . maintains that it would be incompatible with the existence of a private sector."

Turning to corporate taxation, he found also

> "a united front between the apologists of business and the 'New Left', both maintaining that profits cannot be heavily taxed without catastrophic results. . . . For [he is here paraphrasing the Jeremiahs of business and the Left] if taxed beyond a certain point the profit system will break down; the 'oligopolists' will refuse to invest, send their capital abroad and precipitate an economic crisis."

He scorned all such fears and hopes. Tax on, he cried; taxation is good for you. He was in no way inferior to Mr Denis Healey as a pip-squeaker. He himself conceded that "personal taxation must at some point impinge on the supply of ability, effort and risk taking, and cause individuals either to emigrate or opt for leisure." He saw no sign, however, "that we in Britain are at or near this limit—with the one *possible* [my italics] exception of direct taxation on marginal earnings." How he would have recognised that limit when it came we do not know. How hard it is to measure such impalpables as effort withheld, enterprise thwarted, hopes blasted, skills unacquired or left dormant, leisure preferred, though emigration figures are more precise! Meanwhile his words could be used to justify tax piled upon tax, like some ignorant peasant loading more and more on to a half-starved donkey till it expires—when it is too late to unload. As for profits taxes, he agreed with "most economists" (Lord Kaldor is the one he quotes) that they "tend in the long run to be passed on to the consumer in the form of higher margins and prices", leaving the profit system "unaffected by the whole operation." That is, presumably, as long as the poor old consumer goes on doing his stuff. Our consumers seem of late to have let us down.

Anyway at that time he declared that

> "we have all become wearily familiar with the unending lamentations about the 'crippling' level of taxation, the 'crushing' burden of government expenditure, the alleged disincentives to growth, investment and efficiency, and so on *ad nauseam*."

In other words he proclaimed the British economy to be fundamentally in rude health, able easily to bear not only existing burdens but others innumerable soon to be imposed upon it; indeed, that with these further burdens its health could be expected to become even ruder. All this he took for granted.

WHAT KEPT HIM so cheerful? It was not, I fancy, any faith in any sort of socialism, his own sort or any other, though I do not question his

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sincerity. No, paradoxical as it may sound, it seems rather to have been an incongruous, profound and comforting faith, itself irrational, in the ability of capitalism—or at least of the late-capitalist or managerial system which he described and favoured—somehow to keep going, to maintain growth and to enhance prosperity, even when deprived of *rationale,* of all the discipline and rewards, the rules and conditions, the sticks and carrots hitherto thought essential to its success. He often derides Marx's belief in the inevitable collapse of capitalism; is his own belief in its inevitable survival any less absurd? Is it not indeed rather more absurd, in that Marx at least proposed to give the odd helpful nudge to historical processes which he thought inevitable, while Crosland does everything he can think of to render false his own more sanguine expectations?

Now take the profit motive, for instance, the mainspring of capitalism, the devil's work to all good socialists (or, since Anthony Crosland, to most). It was Crosland who first, or most memorably, suggested that profit need not be a dirty word to socialists, thus causing a widespread rearrangement of demons on the Left and commending his work to all non-doctrinaire "men of goodwill." And indeed, as I have said, he was so refreshingly and unexpectedly right (or at least non-Left) about so many things that non-Left people tended to overlook his flaws. For mark now with what qualifications he defends the profit motive. Profits and the market system for which they supply the moving force are perfectly in order, yes—but only on two harsh conditions. One is that effective demand must be equalised, i.e., that incomes must be rendered more equal than the market system would supposedly have arranged unaided.[5] As he puts it elsewhere, "production for use and production for profit may be taken as broadly coinciding now that working class purchasing power is so high."

The other condition is that profits must be retained and not distributed, the penalty for the latter crime being swingeing taxation. This continuous "ploughing back" must, of course, have very adverse effects on the raising of capital for new firms and industries. If existing firms hang on to all they gain, where is new risk capital to be found? Crosland everywhere neglects the needs and role of *new* businesses, and seems to overlook their importance to growth and innovation. Dr Ludwig Erhard took the opposite view, and actually taxed retained German profits more than distributed profits, thus encouraging money to move rapidly about. He was wise to do so if, as there is reason to suppose, retained profits are often or usually uneconomically invested.

Now we can readily see that the profits Crosland tolerates are profits which have lost much of their purpose, in so far as that purpose was to elicit and reward skill, hard work, risk-taking. The word "profit" remains, but the lure, the reward have disappeared. Little reward will find its way into private hands; what does will promptly be redistributed in order to ensure that production, if any, is of "necessities" rather than of "luxuries", i.e. is for "use."[6] The greater part of these pseudo-profits will be retained and ploughed back into the business, leaving the original entrepreneurs and their successors as mere spectators of what they have set in motion—even in a sense prisoners of it. For, should they seek to escape from their ill-rewarded bondage, whether by death or by trying to realise their capital in the hope of some gain, real or illusory, for themselves or loved ones (a gain which must be greatly reduced by the incidence of the high taxes urged by Crosland on distributed profits and "unearned" incomes), then he is waiting for them with an electric fence, dogs, and machine guns at the gate. Taxation, he cries, must be made "to *bite* more *deeply* and more *fiercely*"—my italics, yet surely the savagery of his imagery is not without significance? "The two most important requirements are a comprehensive Capital Gains Tax and a tax on gifts *inter vivos* to restore reality to the death duties", in order to appropriate "a proportion of all gains accruing anywhere in the economy"—of all gains, that is to say, real or, under continuing "mild" inflation, illusory.

THESE MEASURES and the like were designed by Crosland to correct an inequality or inequity (he used the terms interchangeably) in the distribution of wealth. The extent of this inequality, this "maldistribution of property", he grossly exaggerates:

> "Less than 2% of adult persons own 50% per cent of total personal net capital; 10% of persons own nearly 80%."

Polanyi & Wood (in the Institute of Economic Affairs' *How Much Inequality?*) estimate that 10% probably own about 40% of the wealth, but that if each member of that 10% has on average one dependant, then that 10% should be 20%. The "inequity" is not then so vast. That it is to Crosland an

[5] I use the word "supposedly" because I suspect that Pareto, Hayek and others are right in arguing that the free market economy has powerful equalising forces built into it, forces which pseudo-egalitarian interference may actually have damaged or atrophied. Crosland by contrast argues that inequality, unless continuously checked and corrected, will naturally and progressively increase.

[6] If we point out that much of this redistributed profit is itself squandered on television sets, drink, and the betting pools, we are reproved by Crosland as prigs and prudes, which indeed we would be, with knobs on, were the cost of these luxuries *earned* rather than "redistributed" on high moral grounds. He himself is very priggish and prudish about the alleged pleasures of the rich!

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inequity is illustrated by his contention, after arguing that "*some* differential rewards for talent and ability" are to be tolerated, that "justice must here be tempered with efficiency." The inference is clear: justice equals equality, and talent, ability and effort have no claim in *justice* to any differential reward whatsoever. Expediency alone secures their gain, if any, just as it is not justice but expediency which causes us to hand our watches to the mugger.

Inequality even in earned income is to him far too great, also presumably to be corrected by the increased personal taxation which he elsewhere regards as dangerous. The idea that "just" rewards, as some might define them, could actually be more unequal still is naturally to him not worth discussing. He is everywhere concerned to preserve "reasonable rewards", "small and medium savings." He cares nothing for the exceptional rewards which may be required by exceptional efforts and ability, and neglects the contribution to society of exceptional men—even of exceptionally awful men, as he and I might think them. He has little sympathy for any economic aspirations and appetites which he, as a "normal" man, does not share. The average, the mean, the normal, the "reasonable" (the mediocre, some might say) dominate his mind and command his allegiance. Even in the field of education he is of the view that "we need less concentration on an educational élite and more on the average standard of attainment"—two aims of which the first and more disastrous, as we have learnt to our cost, is easier to achieve than the second.

To what extent recent heavy taxation has contributed to equality is still debatable. The poor pay taxes as well as the rich; and the tragedy of those who owned businesses now bankrupt must be measured against the tragedy of those many more thereby thrown out of work and the tragedy—more imponderable—of those who are denied the jobs which could have been provided in new enterprises which prospective entrepreneurs, surveying the odds now against them, the imbalance between risk, effort and reward, have reasonably decided not to launch. It is difficult or impossible to make the rich less rich without making the poor poorer still, and the effort may end with an Eskimo-equality in universal poverty.

BEHIND WHAT Anthony Crosland urged may be discerned a failure to recognise any logical or just connection between production and distribution. They are to him quite separate phenomena. What is produced is produced: that may be taken for granted. What is produced, including profits if any, may then be freely distributed according to egalitarian or other whim. "In the end", as he says in another context, "the proper division of the surplus depends simply on one's own view of the right distribution of total income." Someone created the vineyard, you might say; someone now owns the vineyard; some toil in it; some sell the grapes; some make the wine; but someone else altogether may fitly decide on the proper division of the reward.

The logic and justice of the free market economy is indeed dauntingly complex and obscure.[7] It must seem to ordinary people to distribute its favours and brickbats much as Ophelia distributed her flowers. Yet surely we had a right to expect from a man so clever as Crosland, often so wise, a slightly more sophisticated view of the distribution of wealth than this: that, if wealth is not strictly distributed by the government according to its own system of social priorities, then it will "fall where *economic chance* [my italics] dictates"—that it will "remain with those so placed in relation to the productive process that they initially receive it. . . ." As elsewhere, he speaks contemptuously of "the accident of birth" (which is in fact only an accident to those who view the process coldly from outside, from a long way off, ignoring the chains of mutual love and inherited qualities and attitudes which normally bind parents and children together), so the free economy appears to him a mere lottery, as such also contemptible. He notes with resentment the prizes it offers; he notes with some complacency the efforts it elicits and the wealth it creates. But he does not recognise, or if he recognises does not emphasise, any link between the two. The first can safely be diminished, almost abolished, without affecting the supply of the latter. He does not see any conflict (as others do) between equality and prosperity; if he did, he would presumably choose equality.

Characteristically he regards inherited wealth as particularly and self-evidently indefensible. Certainly it is slightly more difficult to defend than wealth still in the hands of whoever created it. There seems at first glance (and Crosland is in too much of a hurry to give it two glances) little to connect an old lady living comfortably in Bournemouth with any sort of wealth creation. Yet the connection is there all right, but usually buried in the past, a whole period to which in his haste Crosland pays too little attention. Someone created wealth to ensure—perhaps *inter alia*—that this old lady should not want. She has at least as much right to part of the wealth which she in part caused to be created as Crosland or any of his proposed beneficiaries, who had nothing whatever to do with it. She is, so to speak, a retired incentive and, as such, entitled to her pension.

[7] It was so far hidden from Crosland that he at one point suggested that in Russia increasing affluence is likely to *bring about* some sort of free market, thus putting the cart firmly before the horse.

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C. A. R. CROSLAND'S economic sports day is thus one without prizes, or rather with only the most modest prizes, such as might be thought appropriate by some don or the like, not primarily moved by hope of gain; and these prizes are to be held only temporarily, on sufferance, like the school running cups which have to be handed back at the end of the year. To achieve any sort of durable financial success in such a world, were it possible, is to expose oneself not only to Mr Crosland's icy disapproval but, more important, to the envy and resentment of the masses—ugly and unconstructive sentiments which, so far from rebuking, he fully endorses, tries even to share, and proposes to assuage by levelling down the objects of envy.[8] Did it not cross his mind that, the greater the relative equality prevailing, the more all surviving inequalities (and he permits some) will be resented? If, moreover, greater enforced equality is accompanied by or actually causes (as many would expect) a relative or absolute decline in general prosperity, then will not envy find in economic failure its most fertile soil? Long ago Adam Smith defined a healthy society not as an equal one but as one in which most people are getting better off, or can reasonably hope to do so. In such a society equality is of little interest, envy no problem. Should Crosland perhaps have noted a profound book I must commend to all—Helmut Schoeck's study of *Envy*?[9] Professor Schoeck contends that the progress and prosperity of the Western world has only been made possible by the suppression of envy (a suppression which we owe in part to Christian doctrine), of that envy which prevents innovation, which punishes excellence, which falsely suggests that one man may prosper only at another's expense, which prevents individuality, inequality and progress and which, wherever it rages unchecked, wherever in particular it is used as a basis for policy, produces nothing but stagnation and poverty.

IF ANY OF THIS BE TRUE, it is a sinister horse indeed on which Crosland rode. He did so with complacency on account of his oft-expressed contempt for the rich.

> "Only a rather insignificant fraction of surtax incomes is directed towards any intellectual activities whatever; the bulk goes on expensive cars and houses, holidays in Cannes, servants, gin, hotels and restaurants, dances, lavish parties and the like. Indeed Britain can perhaps claim in recent times to have had one of the most illiterate wealthy classes in history."

Private patronage, he declares, "could hardly be said to have had a uniformly splendid record."[10] He chides the rich even for failing to preserve "innumerable Georgian buildings", without bothering to reflect on who put them up in the first place or on how many have been destroyed by public activity and compulsory purchase. Beyond the first generation at least, the rich he regards as totally functionless or, if performing any function, then only one which can be performed as well or better by public authority. He scornfully remarks that

> "it does not require that we preserve all our millionaires on the off chance that one of them may fight an occasional battle for freedom, any more than on the off chance that one of them may prove an enlightened patron of the arts."[11]

Very well: but let us look at this from the other side. Are not freedom and independent art and thought in all their variety, the future of ENCOUNTER itself, if you like, are they not certainly in far less danger if they can rely for their protection and patronage on one or more millionaires of varied interests and tastes or, better still, upon the variously cultivated members of a whole wealthy and leisured class rather than just upon the monopolistic and monopsonistic State alone, which is all that Crosland proposes to leave them?

TO DO HIM JUSTICE, even he shows signs of disquiet at the proletarianisation of culture which has followed the massive transfer of purchasing power from the educated to the uneducated. His remedy is of course to educate the uneducated—yet this somehow without imposing upon them the "middle class ethos" he elsewhere modishly deplores. To do him further justice, it is indeed possible that our rich have recently to some extent let us down. But he should not ignore the part which he and his envious friends, with their deep and fierce taxation, have played in bringing about this betrayal. It certainly

[8] Is not this prevalent endorsement of a deadly sin a real *trahison des clercs?* Was not Mr Crosland surely guilty of another such treason when, in these pages (ENCOUNTER, March 1961) he forbade Britons and Americans to complain "when an underdeveloped country pursues nationalistic or protectionistic economic policies, or seeks to expropriate its foreign-owned basic industries or divagates from the orthodox canons of liberal international trade theory. All these things are natural and inevitable in the early stages of development. . . ."? Surely wherever such things are regarded as "natural and inevitable", there also will poverty and underdevelopment endure. Did Crosland really wish poor countries well, surely he could have offered them better advice than such toadying to their characteristic defects.

[9] Helmut Schoeck, *Envy: A Theory of Social Behaviour* (Secker & Warburg, 1969).

[10] What about the Arts Council then, we may ask; and did ever any private patron pay a fool or fraud to sit on top of a pole or to arrange ordure or dirty nappies in heaps? If so, he at least wasted his own money, not ours.

[11] For a comparable statement, try this: "We need not preserve all our university students on the off chance that one might do some worthwhile research." What would Crosland have said to that?

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makes more sense to drink gin at lavish parties in Cannes if you know that you can leave little or nothing to your descendants or to your pet cultural activities.

Moreover, what Crosland was light years from seeing is that even these gin-swillers perform, despite themselves, various functions. He himself refers to one important function, though without noting its full significance. He quotes Woodrow Wilson as complaining that "nothing has spread socialistic feeling . . . more than the automobile, which offers a picture of the arrogance of wealth." Today, Mr Crosland shrewdly comments, "Leftists wonder ruefully how rapidly it is spreading non-socialistic feeling!" Indeed, he does himself rejoice most openheartedly and unreservedly—it is greatly to his credit—at the motors, washing-machines, and other consumer durables now within easy reach of the working classes. He has little of the sour puritanism of those middle-class socialists who regard it as the function of the poor to remain poor and thus dependent, a constant object of false sympathy and self-gratifying paternalism. Yet we must ask him how many of these desirable objects would now be within the workers' reach if the rich had not existed to buy them, test them and find them good when they were novel and astronomically expensive? He notes elsewhere that education is a social good, not just a private one; it has consequences far beyond the enjoyment of the individual "user." Is it really absurd to regard private wealth as equally a social good, conferring unintended benefits far and wide?

For the idle worthless rich have another function still—to act as a magnet, powerfully influencing the conduct of innumerable others, less rich. There are people so base (did Tony Crosland never meet them? I have met some, and like them on the whole little better than he did, especially those prominent in Labour circles) that their creative entrepreneurial talents are elicited, and perhaps can only be elicited, by the prospect of drinking gin one day at lavish parties in Cannes. One might wish them otherwise, spurred on by cooperative zeal for the common good. But that is how they are—their children might be different. If society abolishes gin and parties, or puts them out of mortal reach, then it must do without the services of such people and without such growth, whether valued by Crosland or no, as they might have engendered. At one point he speculates on whether Mr Charles Clore, said to have made £47m. in 10 years, would "have foregone the deals and lazed about on the Riviera, if taxation had cut this by a half or more. . . ." The answer is to him self-evident, to others less so. He has chosen an unfairly loaded example, since the public utility of Mr Clore's operations is not obvious to all. This example is used to justify heavy taxation on all capital gains, many the result of vast risks taken, of successes won by great effort and indubitably to the public good. Many typical entrepreneurs take almost nothing in income out of the various ventures which they launch in succession; their sole reward comes with the capital gains, if any, on sale. These Crosland would "cut by a half or more", boldly declaring that this would not "inhibit efficiency or risk taking." Why on earth should it not? Nobody is going to cut the risks by "half or more."

"We know too little about incentives", he concedes at one point, "to make firm statements"—firm statements about whether "equality and rapid growth are hard to reconcile" and about whether "socialist policies must necessarily slow down the rate of growth." Such doubts would induce in other less confident men, if they valued growth as he did, an extreme caution in enforcing equality, in destroying existing incentives and in pressing ahead with socialist policies. Not so in him.

HE APPEARS THROUGHOUT to proceed on the assumption that economic man is dead or dying or never lived—an assumption fair enough only in that man's motives have always been various and complex and undoubtedly include all the motives on which he prefers to lay emphasis and on which he relies to supply the energies formerly or allegedly elicited by the acquisitive instinct. Economic man, after all, was only a model—a working model, if you please. In general Crosland declares there to be

> "no reason to believe that an acquisitive and individualistic pattern of behaviour is an essential condition of rapid growth. . . . The fact is that advances in productivity and technical innovation do not come characteristically from people working competitively for individual profit, but from people working on a fixed salary in a large managerial structure."

I think that Professor Jewkes for one would not find this true; and, even if it were, can one be sure that the salaried innovators would go on innovating if it were not for the threat presented by "people working competitively for individual profit"? I would view this "fact" rather as another expression of Crosland's continuous bias in favour of the salaried employee as against the independent operator and in favour of large firms against small. "Progress", he writes, "often demands both a scale of capital investment and an expenditure on . . . research which are beyond the resources . . . of any except large concerns. . . . A system of taxation which favours large established companies is not necessarily bad for economic progress." "Very large companies", he declares elsewhere, "dominate . . . the economy . . . and represent (given the inexorable increase in average size) the clear trend of the future."

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His picture of the modern manager is of an almost entirely non-economic or post-economic or pseudo-economic man. Indeed this manager may still seek to maximise profits (or nowadays to minimise losses): but to what end? Not to distribute these profits to the owners, to the shareholders, indeed, to whose claims "many managements today are at the least indifferent and occasionally even actively hostile"—a fact noted by Crosland with approval. No, this manager maximises profits mainly

> "from a mixture of psychological and social motives. He tends to identify himself closely with his firm, which comes to him to have a definite personality of its own, with interests quite separate from those of the shareholders. And not only all his corporate loyalty to the firm but all his personal motives—professional pride, desire for prestige in the business world, self-realisation, desire for power—find their fulfilment in high output and rapid growth, and hence in high profits, these being both the conventional source of business prestige and the ultimate source of business power."

Perhaps Crosland is rash to link high output, rapid growth, and high profits so tightly together: many grandiose business follies mock him. But we must certainly notice that profits are thus here reduced by him to mere tokens, Monopoly money, the symbol of other things, of prestige and power, without use in themselves except to be "ploughed back" to produce more prestige, more power. Those who agree with Dr Johnson that a man is seldom so innocently employed as in getting money will wonder whether this emasculation and deformation of British managers is welcome, to the extent that it is real. For Crosland, to my mind, persistently overestimates the powerlessness and functionlessness of shareholders, whose power is none the less real for being so rarely exercised. He contradicts himself neatly when writing about the cooperative movement:

> "Ultimate democratic control is not necessarily lost because so few attend or vote. The inactive members still retain their full democratic power in reserve; and they can exercise it at any time they choose."

Yes, and so can shareholders, as some dozy or arrogant managements have suddenly found to their cost. Shareholders can also vote with their money, by selling shares, thus reducing non-economic managers' prestige.

Yet it is undoubtedly true that, in the increasingly controlled, bureaucratised and centrally directed economy now prevailing and always favoured by Crosland, managers may well feel that they have more to fear or hope for from governments than from shareholders and adjust their conduct accordingly, as Crosland describes:

> "Now perhaps most typical amongst very large firms is the company which pursues rapid growth and high profits—but subject to its 'sense of social responsibility' and its desire for good public and labour relations. Its chairman will orate on the duty of industry not to the shareholder alone, but also to the consumer, the worker and the public at large. And some at least of this talk is reflected in company policy."

Such a firm will hang on to its profits, export more than is economically justified, butter up its trade unions, never dismiss redundant workers, charge only "fair" prices, site new plants where the government wants it to, operate expensive welfare programmes, make gifts to education, patronise the arts, and participate in local community affairs: "Its goals are a 'fair' rather than a maximum profit, reasonably rapid growth, and the warm glow which comes from a sense of public duty"—and a title doubtless for the chairman to boot.

CROSLAND DOES NOT ALTOGETHER deny the economic waste and losses caused by such pliant and amiable policies:

> "On the one hand, management becomes slothful if it is spurred on neither by a personal stake in profit nor by the pressure of shareholders; on the other hand, we have a less efficient allocation of resources if profit maximisation is abandoned and decisions are taken on non-economic criteria. I am inclined to think this is true. Yet I doubt if it is more than a small part of the explanation of our poor economic performance; and in any case it is easily outweighed, in my view, by the social gain."

By now this non-economic motivation must surely be viewed as a much greater cause of our much poorer performance. Certainly one of the joys of being rich is that one can afford to be wasteful and inefficient within reason; alas, we do not seem to have been as rich as Crosland sanguinely supposed, and the social gains are now themselves outweighed, in *my* view, by the resultant unemployment, stagnation, and frustration of all legitimate aspirations.

Crosland thus sees managers as floating rudderless in a sort of vacuum, blown hither and thither by alternate gusts of public duty and non-economic self-interest, responsible to nobody in particular and to everyone in general. They thus become exceptionally biddable and responsive to preponderant government pressure (or "bullying"—the word he himself uses). He refers with mixed complacency and contempt to the "other-directed organisation-men of Shell and

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I.C.I., jelly-fish where their predecessors were masterful . . . slaves to their public relations departments", terrified of parliamentary questions, the Board of Trade, the unions, the Press, a Labour government, the consumer movement, old Uncle Tom Cobbleigh and all—all of which "counter pressures" should, according to Crosland, "be stronger still." Surely never was such an armoury of terrors deployed against a few other-directed jelly-fish!

THIS CONTEMPT explains his revisionist doubt that "the pattern of ownership will uniquely determine anything", his conviction that "the question of ownership is of less importance than other factors", and his consequent rejection of nationalisation as a panacea for all our woes—a rejection which brought him much non-socialist acclaim and must have won many non-doctrinaire recruits for the new non-doctrinaire Labour Party he appeared to represent. What indeed is the point of nationalisation if one can without it direct every jelly-fish in the land by a judicious mixture of bribes, threats, arbitrary prohibitions, regulations, tax concessions, pressures and counter-pressures? His point is really a simple one: that the government is now so powerful and businessmen so wet that the former can control (or, if you please, mess up) the whole economy without owning any part of it, or certainly no part it does not already own.

Indeed he does seem to scorn not only nationalisation but also most of the other institutions and attitudes which we associate with the Labour movement. He upbraids the trade unions for becoming "increasingly unpopular" and generating "an unfavourable public image, some of which rubs off on to Labour." They should look to this, and engage public relations officers. He berates the cooperative movement for being associated with "a drab, colourless, old-fashioned mediocrity", and for betraying "a somewhat patronising and insulting attitude to the wants and expectations of the ordinary cooperative member." What is required here, it seems, is "a change of attitude." He deplores the complacent parsimony of the Left:

> "The trade unions, the cooperative movement, the nationalised industries, local government and the Labour party itself have all been gravely weakened by the twin beliefs that all jobs can be done by laymen and amateurs, and hence that no need arises to pay adequate salaries to attract scarce expert talent—whether in top management, public relations, economics, research staff or what. We should not confuse egalitarianism with anti-professionalism; but the constant harping on managerial rewards, understandable as it is [and so it should be, to an old harper like himself], encourages us to do so."

He does not spare State education: "In some overcrowded secondary modern schools, where the staff changes frequently, children are scarcely being educated at all. Moreover, there is no free choice"—nor does he advocate any. The behaviour of some Labour-controlled councils is to him "the subject of anxious study." The whole public sector falls under his lash—schools, hospitals, roads, mental homes, universities, housing. Whatever the State does it does badly, he admits; wherever it interferes the results have normally been unfortunate.

MANY OF US WOULD AGREE with some or all of these strictures. We accordingly place ourselves at some distance from the Labour Party, which seems to us to stand precisely for what is here criticised. Mr Crosland seems to see no necessary connection between the Labour Party and what he deplores. He does not see all these advantages, as we do, as part of the very essence and purpose of the Labour movement, the inevitable fruits of its thoughts and actions, the price of its achievements. No, they are to him regrettable but dispensable adjuncts, inessentials, the result of "attitudes" now to be changed, part of an "image" no longer appropriate and accordingly to be discarded like a used paper handkerchief. Like so many other socialists, less intelligent and more extreme, he is compelled to say that his sort of socialism too is not what exists, here or anywhere else (save perhaps in a Sweden seen through rose-tinted spectacles), but something quite different and much better. What is and what should be are not connected in his mind.

A LIKE FAILURE TO CONNECT is evident in his oft-expressed admiration for the United States of America, for instance, and for Marks & Spencer. He is more than fair in noting what is good about these two great free enterprises. He even notes, without any apparent consciousness of irony, that the distribution of wealth in America is (allegedly but quite possibly) notably more equal than in Britain (and this surely, I must add, largely by the operation of free market forces, for nothing like the down-levelling measures which he advocates was in his day known there). What he does not note is that both America and Marks & Spencer are run on principles which are quite alien to his own, and that their virtues in consequence cannot simply be filched from them and screwed on to polities and undertakings conducted on lines harshly inimical to those virtues. He praises generously, but does not seem to reflect on or profit by it. He wants in many ways to get nearer to America; but, like the rolling

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English drunkard trying to get to John O'Groats, he is travelling eastwards to his destination, unlikely therefore to arrive.

ABOUT NATIONALISATION ITSELF his mind is similarly equivocal and ambiguous. He reviews its past without enthusiasm:

> "Some of the anticipated advantages did not materialise: while certain unexpected disadvantages emerged.

Control over the nationalised public boards, moreover, is difficult to exercise. "We now understand rather better that monopoly, even where it is public, has definite drawbacks." (Others might say "*especially*" rather than "*even* where it is public": for a public monopoly is far more durable than a private one, protected as it normally is by statute and government interference from all change and competition.) Crosland deplored the restriction of free choice of goods and suppliers, and had second thoughts about largeness of scale: "Before the War it was treated as axiomatic that . . . large-scale production, especially when conducted in large-size firms and plants, results in maximum efficiency. Today we are not so sure—at least beyond a certain size." (He later had third thoughts, commending the merger-mania of the Wilson government.) He pointed to the dangers of over-centralisation, and quoted with approval the doubts of some Left-wingers: "We cannot disguise the fact that the public corporations have not, so far, provided everything which socialists expected from nationalised industries." "The continuous proliferation of State monopolies" would be in Crosland's view "economically irresponsible." It would be bad for exports and the balance of payments: in other words we cannot afford to play the fool while foreigners are still in their right mind!

Yet nationalisation, thus firmly shown the door, soon comes clambering back in modified, but not less alarming, form through the window. It is now to be "supple, flexible and relevant . . . to achieve certain definite socialist ends." Vast funds would accrue to the state from that deep and fierce taxation—i.e. from the ruin of many independent businesses. These funds would be used "generally to increase the area of public ownership" and to "extend public investment *in any direction*" (my italics). Public boards would be set up to manage these funds and operations, at once "independent of the Government in their day-to-day operations" (a phrase we have heard before) and yet responsive to legitimate Government requests, for instance, "to play a consciously stabilising role in the [stock] market."

Outright nationalisation itself was by no means ruled out by Crosland. The insurance industry, for instance, should be nationalised, in order to promote a more "venturesome" investment policy and to ensure that its first duty is no longer to its policy holders—tough luck on them! Indeed by 1974 Mr Crosland had inconspicuously become a thoroughgoing nationaliser again. Encouraged by various illusory or temporary "successes" in the public sector, he proclaims that "public ownership . . . can now be used more freely", with land, oil, privately rented housing, and "parts" of the construction industry at the top of his shopping list. Nationalisation is also favoured where it is necessary to force a firm to "spend more money, or spend it differently": "it should be a constant preoccupation of government to bully backward industries into spending more on research, investment and the developing of new products." Old-style monopoly nationalisation would not normally be necessary: "the object could usually be attained by selective or competitive public enterprise", by which the nationalisation of one or more individual firms "would be expected, by the force of example and competition, to galvanise the whole industry into raising its standards of research, efficiency and innovation."

EVEN FROM Anthony Crosland's own gloomy reflections on our institutions, we might have derived some inkling of the resultant shambles. "A dogged resistance to change", he wrote in 1960, "now blankets every segment of our national life. . . . Our Parliament and civil service . . . are in fact in need of drastic modernisation." Why, then, should these bodies, outmoded and inefficient as he thinks them, be thought fit to supervise or carry through "the galvanising of whole industries"? Has any part of private industry, without grave penalty, displayed such incompetence in the control and expenditure of funds as recently have Parliament and the Civil Service? When these have sponsored "research and innovation", such as Concorde and arguably the advanced gas-cooled reactor, has not the resultant waste been not merely scandalous, but even gravely damaging to the nation's prosperity? And again, when have Government bodies intervened to "stabilise" anything without destabilising everything? What indeed are these boards of Crosland's but a proliferation of organised projectors and speculators, the more irresponsible for playing about with other people's money not their own, a wild bevy of Leylands, Ryders and Crown Agents, all floundering about out of their depth?

We may do well to look more closely also at the principle of "selective competition." These competing state firms will trade with a bounty. They will presumably have at their disposal the full contents of the taxpayer's purse (I was about to say

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"bottomless purse", but that cliché now rings false). For when, if failure looks imminent, has the state ever neglected to rally to the aid of its own children? This is to say that the private firms with which the state firms compete will themselves have to finance in part, directly or indirectly, their own competitors. If the state firms compete successfully, their private competitors will lose their markets. If they compete unsuccessfully, the burdens on their successful private competitors will be by taxation increased. In either case, the prospect before private competitors looks less like any sort of galvanisation than ruin, swift or slow. They will then have "failed the nation." As such, they too will become candidates, more or less willing, at least resigned to their fate, for nationalisation or public aid and "participation."

CROSLAND HIMSELF mercilessly ridiculed the Labour Party's frivolous and ever-changing nationalisation proposals, which do indeed recall the indecision of a muddle-headed housewife in a supermarket and also, as he said, constitute a damaging, if vague, threat to the whole of private industry.

> "Thus sugar and cement were in the programme in 1950, but not in 1955 or 1959. Chemicals were on the list in 1955, but not in 1950 or 1959; while insurance, meat-wholesaling, machine tools, mining machinery, aircraft and heavy electrical engineering have all made transient appearances at different times."

There was also the threat to "the 600 largest companies." Very well, but what comfort could private industry derive from Crosland's own approach, a bludgeon in both hands, taxation in this one, subsidised competition in that, the first ready to fall everywhere, the second anywhere, "in any direction", setting in train a process which (unlike any one of Labour's ridiculous but relatively precise proposals taken by itself) has no limit or term till the whole economy has fallen by design or accident into the hands of the ever-swelling state?

He himself in his Costa Rica lecture declared that "a mixed economy is essential to social democracy" and that "complete state collectivism is without question incompatible with liberty and democracy." A private sector is as essential to a mixed economy as milk is to white coffee. How long then can how much of the private sector survive if existing Croslandite trends are maintained? Not long, perhaps, and not much; and we may add that, if complete state collectivism is incompatible with liberty and democracy, then partial or preponderant state collectivism must be gravely dangerous to liberty and democracy. He loved them both, but put them both in mortal peril.

HAVE I GREATLY OVERSTATED the case? Had he lived, Tony Crosland could have argued so, or indeed he could have rowed back and back until in the end his proposals were more in line with the "mixed-up variegated pattern of ownership" which he thought essential to "guarantee personal liberty and the fragmentation of power" and which he continuously, and I am sure sincerely, favoured.

Bitterly do I regret that he is not with us to do one or other of these things, did he think fit to do so. It would not seem to me even seemly thus to argue with a recently dead man (least of all in these columns which he so often graced) from whom I personally received nothing but courtesy and kindness and whom I shall always remember with pleasure and respect, were it not for the importance of the issues involved (which he could hardly deny) and were it not for his own well-remembered joy in controversy, which he always conducted as he vainly advised his Labour colleagues to do, without rancour, malice, or hatred, without personal bias or intrigue, with self-control, in a tone "temperate and even comradely."

On the other hand, our national experience over the past 14 years, in which so much has gone ill in ways which should have puzzled and disturbed Crosland, does not suggest the case to be overstated; and, if it is not, then Crosland may be seen as offering willy-nilly not so much *alternative* ends to those of the extreme Left as an alternative route to the *same* ends. He repeatedly (and I am sure rightly) scoffs at Marx's prediction of the inevitable crisis and collapse of capitalism, due to its own inner contradictions. Indeed, there is nothing obvious and incorrigible in capitalism itself to make such disasters inevitable. No, it is Crosland and his like who seem to me to render them likely by supplying external contradictions, from outside; they are thus anti-Marxists yoked to Marx's chariot, Marxists *malgré eux*.

He himself described the revisionism he urged as destroying

> "the simplicity, the certainty and the unquestioning conviction that come from having clear-cut crusading objectives to fight for and a hated, easily identified enemy to fight against. It makes everything complicated and ambiguous. . . ."

His road to socialism is in exactly these ways less simple and certain than that of the Left, more complicated and ambiguous, less obviously hostile to liberty and prosperity, the more insidious and ingratiating, thus all the harder to resist. It does not present itself as "a hated, easily identified enemy to fight against." Indeed, many non-socialists have surveyed it with a certain bemused and hesitant goodwill, thinking it perhaps more friend than foe, as truly it contains elements of both.

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HOW COULD SUCH non-socialists fail to be reassured by a man who calls not only for higher exports and old-age pensions but also for

> "more open-air cafés, brighter and gayer streets at night, later closing hours for public houses, more local repertory theatres, better and more hospitable hoteliers and restaurateurs, brighter and cleaner eating houses, more riverside cafés, more pleasure-gardens on the Battersea model, more murals and pictures in public places, better designs for furniture and pottery and women's clothes, statues in the centre of new housing estates, better-designed street-lamps and telephone kiosks,[12] and so on *ad infinitum*. . . ."

What an enlivening prospect: Paris rather than Moscow, more Toulouse-Lautrec than socialist realism! Yet Crosland characteristically ignores the role of private means in ensuring the survival, *ambience* and prosperity of many of these charming amenities. That riverside restaurant which we can afford to go to once in a while, on special occasions, is in fact kept going by those who can afford to eat out there often and well: no rich, alas, no restaurant.

Tony Crosland's typical neglect may in part explain the fearful contrast between the enlivening prospects he offers and the shabby, decaying slum, the haunted house, in which we have been condemned (as I argue) by his egalitarian fervour to live. All around us we see frustration, failure, hopelessness, the very soil in which alone can thrive (apart from punk rock, and whatever *that* rough beast may portend) those sour and mad fanatics whom he detested so much, whom he aimed to outflank and thwart, and for whom he has unwittingly paved the way.

[12] Were the present kiosks designed, incidentally, by Lutyens? If so, have we better designers than he?

They flee from me that sometime did me seek

At this moment in time
the chicks that went for me
in a big way
are opting out;
as of now, it's an all-change situation.

The scenario was once,
for me, 100% better.
Kissing her was viable
in a nude or semi-nude situation.
It was *How's about it, baby?*,
her embraces were relevant
and life-enhancing.

I was not hallucinating.
But with regard to that one
my permissiveness
has landed me in a forsaking situation.
The affair is no longer on-going.
She can, as of now, explore new parameters—
How's about it? indeed!
I feel emotionally underprivileged.
What a bitch!
(and that's meaningful!).

Gavin Ewart

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LETTERS

Quester's European Defence

GEORGE QUESTER'S essay "Can Europe Really be Defended?" (September, 1978) was elegantly argued but in my view fails on three fundamental issues:

1. The intrinsical part of Mr Quester's argument is the alleged stability engendered by the new electronic weapons. Moreover, he claims, "An important advantage of the new generation of anti-tank and anti-aircraft precision-guided missiles is that they are relatively easy to operate."

Neither of these premises can be accepted as an undisputed fact. Most of the new generation of Western weapons are still on the drawing-board. Where they are available, they are so complicated that few soldiers, from privates to generals, understand them; and so expensive that they cannot be used for training. ("Today's weapons are too complex for today's soldiers", wrote Arthur T. Hadley in the *Washington Post* of 4 July, 1978.)

Of the anti-tank weapons on which Mr Quester places such an emphasis, the US forces have two: the wire-guided *Dragon* and the TOW missile. The *Dragon* is too heavy to fire standing up, and when fired lying down its blast is liable to burn off the gunner's buttocks (as Mr Hadley found out). The TOW missile is so expensive that every TOW gunner gets to fire one round every other year. This is a vastly different appraisal from Mr Quester's bland statement that "even a 'week-end warrior' reserve soldier can use them", i.e. electronic weapons effectively.

Nor does Mr Quester mention chemical warfare for which Soviet forces are now fully trained.

2. The naive belief that the seizure of West Berlin would be followed by "a prolonged termination of trade between West and East Germany, and between NATO countries and the Soviet bloc" is nothing but wishful thinking. The paths of recent history are littered with such firm resolutions (Czechoslovakia in 1968, the sentencing of Dissidents of this year) broken within weeks.

"The Art of Heavy Crawling" as your headline writer so aptly calls the abject Western surrender to every Soviet outrage, has grown apace. How long would it be after the Soviet seizure of Berlin before France sent a mission to Moscow pleading for trade and "cultural" exchanges? How long before German industrialists would be pressing the Bonn government, of whatever stripe, to keep their factories going with East German and Soviet contracts?

3. Mr Quester's complacent acceptance of the possibility of the loss of Hamburg is beyond belief. Such a loss would result in exactly the opposite reaction to that envisaged by Mr Quester (". . . it might be a long time before the NATO side were to relax and be susceptible to the next grab"). On the contrary, such a successful Soviet adventure would provide an enormous fillip to all the defeatist tendencies now rampant in Western Europe — "let's make a deal with the Russians before it's our turn to be grabbed!"—and would spell the end of NATO.

In a world in which even such kept monarchs as King Hussein and King Hassan can cock a snook at Washington's entreaties, the surrender to the Communist bloc of a major European city would be the final demonstration of the demise of the West.

F. S. MANOR

Winnipeg Free Press
Winnipeg, Canada

Nuremberg Justice

LIKE Mr Robert Conquest ("The Nuremberg Trial", ENCOUNTER, Letters, November 1978) I deplore the fact that the Soviet Union was among the powers sitting in judgment over Nazi aggression at Nuremberg. I cannot, however, accept his thesis that this fact alone "totally invalidates the Nuremberg Trial as a judiciary process." It was Hitler who, with his attack on the Soviet Union, made that state an ally of Britain and the USA; and, consequently, there was no possibility in 1945 to exclude that ally who had suffered terribly from German aggression from the benches of prosecutors and judges at Nuremberg. The only alternative would have been to let the Goerings and the Streichers go free; and I do not think Mr Conquest would have approved of that. His suggestion that the Nuremberg defendants should have been put "before courts-martials for specific offences they had actually committed" is no alternative at all. Disregarding the loss of the most valuable historical documentation which we all owe to the Nuremberg Trial, even this procedure would have been impossible without Soviet approval and Soviet participation. It is a matter for the courts and not for the prosecution to decide whether anybody "had actually committed" a crime.

The Nuremberg charges against the defendants of having organised the Katyn massacre were only made by the Soviet prosecutor. The Foreign Office files for 1946 contain an interesting letter from the chief British prosecutor, Sir Hartley Shawcross, to Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary (28 December 1945).

> "The British side has done its best [Shawcross wrote] "to convince the Russians of the unwisdom to include the Katyn murders in the indictment against the principal German war Criminals."

Nevertheless, "they insisted on doing so, although I believe they are now a bit doubtful of the wisdom of their decision." In Shawcross' opinion, one was here on an "exceedingly delicate and difficult ground", and he was not at all happy about the solution. At the end of June 1946 it had become known that the Nuremberg Tribunal had decided to admit three defence and three prosecution witnesses in the Katyn matter. Sir Patrick Dean of the Foreign Office noted that "British prosecution will take no part and British judges are aware of difficulties." The Tribunal, however, was not impressed by the witnesses presented by the Soviet prosecutor. The utmost it could do in the conditions then prevailing was not to mention the matter at all in the Judgment. Here applies the Roman maxim that "*sapienti sat est.*"

J. W. BRUEGEL

London

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Glasgow

FREEZING POINT: Television has replaced the devil in finding evil for idle hands, Mr Desmond Queen, defending, said in Glasgow Sheriff Court yesterday.

Mr Queen said that Raymond Cairns, 23, and Francis Glencross, 21, had got the idea of robbing a supermarket from a television programme. The two men discussed the idea with friends in a public house, and bolstered by drink they made masks out of denims and went ahead.

Police, who had been tipped off, were waiting at the supermarket in Dalmarnock. Mr Queen said police yelled: "Everybody freeze"—a word not normally used by British police and another example of the influence television was exerting.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Bonn

ARRESTING LAST WORDS: *Six members of the staff of an East German newspaper have been arrested for allegedly adding a derogatory sentence to a speech made by the head of state and party leader, Erich Honecker.*

The speech by Mr Honecker was made to the eighth congress of the East German Social Unity (Communist) Party's central committee. The paper quoted him as saying that

"in the interests of the working people it [the state apparatus] does everything in order to safeguard the revolutionary achievements and to defend socialism and peace."

The staff of the newspaper, published in Cottbus, added the sentence:

"In doing so it has failed and will also fail in the future."

THE GUARDIAN

Royal Greenwich Observatory

STOP-PRESS NEWS: The classic example of an exploding galaxy is called M82, which is the nearest galaxy in which evidence of violent activity has been seen. However, as an exploding galaxy it was thought to be a fraud. Detailed observations showed that it had not exploded after all. But now unexpected new evidence has forced scientists to resurrect the explosion theory.

NATURE TIMES NEWS SERVICE

London

GENTLE SPECIES: *Major Douglas Sutherland is a gentleman and he has written a comprehensive guide to what this involves.*

"The gentleman," he writes, "is not fluent with such terms of endearment as 'Darling,' 'Sweetheart,' or 'My gorgeous little Passion Flower.' In moments of great affection he may refer to his wife as a 'good old bag' or a 'dear old faggot' and, if she should chance to hear the remark, she will blush with pleasure and feel warm for the rest of the day."

A gentleman always has highly polished shoes, carries his handkerchief tucked in his sleeve, and, if he is traditionally minded, smokes his cigar with the band on.

He observes that London clubs are so desperate for members that at least one has started to admit journalists. Not so. Almost any London club offers the risk of being hacked to death by wild journalists, who are certainly not gentlemen.

THE TIMES/DAILY TELEGRAPH

Edinburgh

THE END IS NIGH: During the festival's discussion on censorship, Mr Eric Pace, a Writer's Guild member, said that the BBC's new sensitiveness to what it called "bad language" indicated that it was now running scared and threatening to move into a new dark age.

THE TIMES

Washington

DO IT YOURSELF GOD KITS: *To visit a bookstore today [writes George F. Will] is to feel misgivings about universal literacy, which has produced a mass market for hundreds of profoundly sad handbooks on achieving happiness. Sixty years ago P. G. Wodehouse wrote about fashionable parties where "men with new religions drink tea with women with new hats." Spiritual fads, like other fashions, change with the seasons, and today publishers offer:*

"Moodswing: The Third Revolution in Psychiatry", "Psychiatry", "Psycho-Cybernetics and Self-Fulfilment", "Kicking the Fear Habit", "How to Be Your Own Best Friend", "Looking Out for Number One", "When I Say No, I Feel Guilty" ("systematic assertive therapy"), "The Strategy of Self-Esteem", "I Ain't Well—But I Sure Am Better" (not to be confused with "I Ain't Much, Baby—But I'm All I've Got" or "I'm O.K., You're O.K."), "Biorhythm Compatibility", and "Release Your Brakes!" (an "owner-operator's manual for the human system").

For those whose brakes are really off, there is "Running and Being", a gurgly assertion that jogging "joins body and soul into integrated wholeness", because: "If you want to find answers to the Big Questions about your soul, you'd best begin with the little questions about your body."

Such "manuals" are, as Henry Fairlie says, Do-It-Yourself God Kits which report what the serpent said: "Ye shall be as Gods". These books are read by people who watch their moods and feelings "as they watch the bathroom scales."

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

LIKE IT IS: A girl of 14 told an Old Bailey jury yesterday that she and other teenagers laughed as a 13-year-old girl was tortured. She said: "She was bleeding bad. We were all laughing."

Another defendant, Bartley, refused to make a statement saying: "If I do, all the other bloods would know and I would lose my reputation. I am the tops, the main man. They do like I tell them."

DAILY MAIL

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Oxford University Press

Can You Find Me

Christopher Fry

'Nobody but a famous man would devote a book to very ordinary ancestors and only an experienced writer could make them interesting if he did . . . . Mr Fry makes them memorable by portraying them precisely as they were, with no descent to the picturesque . . . . Christopher Fry's organization of what mounts up to a considerable body of material is ingenious and inventive.' Patricia Beer in *The T.L.S.* Illustrated £5.95

The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney

Michael Hurd

'This book is an exemplary work of its kind: concise . . . . meticulously researched, and cautious in its theorizing. Anyone who admires Gurney either as a poet or as a composer has good reason to be grateful to Hurd for what must have been a long and difficult task. And those who don't yet admire Gurney – and they must be far more numerous – could have even more reason for gratitude, for this book may direct them to his works.' Samuel Hynes in *The T.L.S.* Illustrated £5.95

On Difficulty and other Essays

George Steiner

These essays are, in the proper sense of the term, 'working papers' – essays which aim to initiate discussion and further work, and which raise questions at the frontier of our understanding of language and society. They are essential reading for the layman as well as the specialist. £5.50

Change in British Society

A. H. Halsey

In this expanded version of the Reith Lectures Professor Halsey chronicles the changes that have taken place in British society during this century. His book is lucidly argued and free of jargon, and it offers a much-needed proof of the value and validity of sociology. £4.50 paper covers £1.95 OPUS

Main Currents of Marxism

Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution

Leszek Kolakowski

Translated by P. S. Falla

In these three volumes Leszek Kolakowski delineates the development of Marx's own thought and the contributions of his best-known followers. No survey of the Marxist tradition could fail to be controversial, but Professor Kolakowski's treatment is detached and pluralistic and he does not attempt to identify a pure or essentially Marxist stand in the tradition as a whole. Volume I £7.95, Volumes II and III £8.50 each

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